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EIGHT YEARS AMONG THE MALAYS

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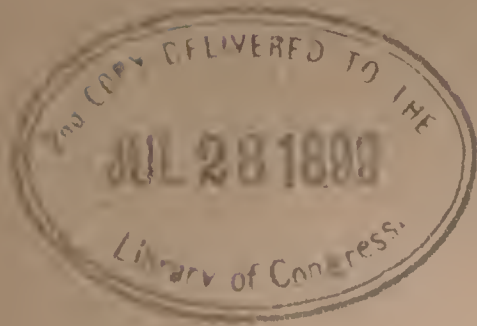
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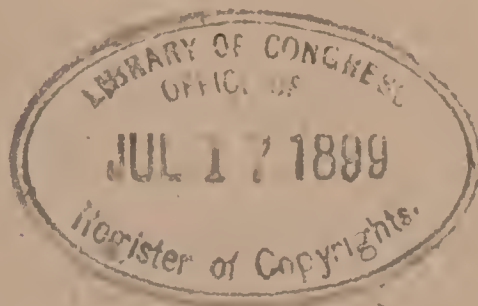
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PREFACE.

The following chapters were composed almost exclusively from an oral account of his adventures in the Far East by a former member of the Dutch Colonial Army. At his special request and against my own wishes a mention of his name in connection with this work is suppressed.

This book is a history, not fiction. It was written in the summer of 1897, when none except perhaps some far-seeing statesman even dreamed that the United States would ever acquire territory in the East Indies. As these Reminiscences are neither a compendium of dry scientific facts, nor a rehash of what has been printed elsewhere, but a faithful account of those scenes and occurrences which made the most lasting impression on a man who spent the best years of his life in the wilds of Sumatra among Malay tribes similar to those now in insurrection against the United States government on the Philippine Islands, it may not be presuming too much to assert that they will prove interesting reading to the American people.

PAUL DACHSEL.

Milwaukee, Wis., July 12, 1899.

INTRODUCTION.

The Island of Sumatra covers an area of 170,744 square miles, which is larger than that of the State of California and a trifle less than that of the United Kingdom, Portugal and Switzerland combined. The native population is about four millions and comprises the Malays proper, who inhabit the southern portion of the island, the Achinese, the Mohammedan and the Cannibal Battahs. The piratical exploits of the Achinese are a matter of history and have been effectually terminated on the high seas by Dutch cruisers, without, however, altogether preventing surreptitious attacks from the land on unprotected vessels stranded among the cliffs or loading cargoes of black pepper along the coast. The Cannibal Battahs, whose religious tenets are extremely vague and most probably corrupted remnants of the Buddhistic faith once prevalent on Sumatra, infest the shores of Lake Tobah and to this day make the large island of Ambarita, which divides that romantic body of water into two unequal halves, the scene of their orgies, in which their unhappy victims, whether prisoners of war, condemned criminals, captive travellers or strangers, behold themselves tied to the stake, hacked to pieces inch by inch and literally eaten alive by the savages. The Mohammedan Battahs, who inhabit a large tract of land extending nearly from the west to the east coast of Sumatra and from the provinces of Acheh and Deli on the north to those of Asahan and Simpanuli on the east and south, have been weaned from their cannibalistic propensities and have assumed the peaceful qualities of the Malays proper.

In order to hold in check the warlike, liberty-loving and fanatical Achinese and compel them to pay tribute, the Dutch have established during the past two decades chains of military posts throughout the northern portion of Sumatra, which, however, have not prevented the natives from frequently attacking the convoys supplying the various forts with munitions and provisions. Skirmishes between the Dutch and the Achinese are still a matter of daily occurrence, although a notice of them rarely finds its way into the newspapers.

The Dutch Colonial Government, for reasons of its own, has apparently attempted to cast a veil of secrecy over its operations in that portion of Sumatra where it has not yet wholly succeeded in subjugating the natives. This may account for the fact that there is not one satisfactory map of Northern Sumatra accessible to the public. An Austrian traveller, Freiherr von Brenner, who crossed the Battah lands in 1887 and, in 1894, published an interesting account of his adventures with the cannibals, frequently mentions

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Fort Laguboti, which is situated on the southern shore of Lake Tobah, but his map of the lake and its environment does not show either that or any other military post.

The Dutch land forces in the East Indies consist of eighteen battalions, or about ten thousand white and twenty thousand native soldiers. The latter are recruited from among the Javanese, Amboinese and the half-breeds of the white, brown, black and yellow races. This small military force holds in check a population of more than thirty millions, but its task is facilitated by the dissensions of the native tribes among each other.

The twenty-five millions of Javanese are undoubtedly the most oppressed nation in the Indian Archipelago. Although intelligent and peaceful, they are rigidly excluded from all the advantages of civilization and kept in a condition of semi-slavery by the Dutch. Their education is limited to the meagre information imparted to them by the hadjis, or Mohammedan priests. They are not allowed to wear European clothes or even shoes. They are compelled to deliver at the government's warehouses at prices fixed by the latter all the coffee, rice and indigo produced by them, to build roads and to do guard duty in the villages at night without recompense. After dark the natives are not allowed to walk without a lantern or torch. They are compelled to pay an annual tax of about ten cents for every cocoanut-tree, whether bearing fruit or not. For a mere pittance the villagers are required to carry the luggage of soldiers or of travellers from station to station. Their only privilege is that of cutting the rice on the plantations, for which labor they receive every seventh bundle.

After England in 1824 ceded back to Holland the latter's East Indian possessions, which had been taken from the Dutch during the Napoleonic wars, Holland concluded a treaty with China, which recognized the former as the most favored nation and in return allowed the Chinese coolies and traders free ingress into the Dutch possessions. The advent of the Chinese proved disastrous to the Javanese as well as to the kindred Malay tribes, because the latter were soon inveigled into the general use of opium. The Dutch have licensed the infamous traffic in the drug, the corrupting influences of which are everywhere plainly visible, by selling to unscrupulous Chinese merchants the monopoly of vending that article upon payment of an annual tax of one million guilders for each district. Their infatuation for opium has made the Javanese the serfs of the Chinese as well as of the Dutch. The Malays proper of Sumatra have shown themselves less tractable to the seductive arts of the opium venders and have preserved a more independent spirit. The use of narcotics is calculated to heighten the religious fanaticism of the natives and may some day prove a source of danger to their foreign masters. Of late years, insurrections, of which no report was permitted to leave the country, have

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occurred even among the peaceful Javanese in the District of Bantam. These outbreaks are directly traceable to the use of opium and to the oppressions of the Chinese, who have become the virtual lords of the soil of Java. The pilgrimages to Mecca of all the Mohammedan Malays and Javanese who can afford to make the trip, are not conducive toward increasing their love either for the Dutch or for the Chinese.

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CHAPTER I.

FROM BATAVIA TO PADANG-LAUT.



On an April morning in the year 1884, the day of the departure of the big transport Soorakarta for the ports of Sumatra, there was considerable bustle on the Groote Boom, as the military dock in the roadstead of Batavia is called. The warfare against the piratical Achinese and the cannibal Battahs was at its height, and the Soorakarta was destined to convey munition and reinforcements to the Dutch colonial troops in the hostile regions. Black clouds of smoke issued from the funnels of the steamer, which were painted blue, white and red, the national colors of Holland. A small army of coolies in charge of the boatswain were loading the vessel with the latest consignments of freight and supplies and filling the air with the sound of monotonous Malay and Javanese ditties.

The broad granite dock was the rendezvous of a motley crowd of soldiers guarding the approaches, of Javanese and Chinese hucksters, government officials, friends and relatives of the departing warriors, and the usual quota of idle spectators, male and female, who, like minute-men in turbulent times, put in an early appearance on all occasions which rise a trifle above the routine course of events.

The enterprising Chinese peddlers, dressed in white blouses and trousers, wore beaked felt shoes or leather sandals on their feet, and yellow straw hats almost as large as a parasol on their heads. Their stock in trade was contained in covered baskets suspended from bamboo poles resting horizontally on their shoulders. For the purpose of attracting the attention of purchasers to their frippery, they produced a noise resembling the clatter of castanets by means of rattles consisting of leaden balls in wooden cases. The warongs, or eating-booths, directly opposite the dock, were managed chiefly by Javanese and afforded the travelers a last opportunity to regale themselves with native delicacies. Tobacco, clothing and jewelry were also sold in those establishments, to which many a soldier, European as well as native, who had supplied himself shortly before the hour of embarkation with a dusky maid to comfort him in the midst of fatigues inseparable from a campaign in savage lands, turned his steps to purchase a pretty sarong, a silver girdle or some trinket to gladden the eye, and awaken devotion to him in the heart, of his new companion. The venders of cooling drinks, such as ice-water, lemonade and palm-

wine, had little occasion to put their lungs to any great test, for the sun was rapidly nearing the zenith and admonished all in his quiet but powerful way to counteract the effects of his rays by a liberal absorption of liquids.



A battalion of infantry, which had been sent from Weltevreden in advance of the embarking troops, formed a cordon about the railway terminus, while its band took position on the platform. The cordon is formed as a matter of precaution, to prevent desertions, especially of those soldiers, who, on account of minor offences against discipline, have been relegated to the second-class and are distinguished by the mark "No. 2" on their caps, and of the orang-rante, or "chain-boys," who, for violations of the criminal code, have been sentenced to deportation to Sumatra. The chain-boys are recruited mainly from the Javanese, the white convicts being confined in the penitentiary at Pondjul, Java. They are employed in carrying the dead and wounded out of the fire, in cutting grass for the horses of the cavalry, in sweeping the barracks, and for other menial tasks about the military camps.

When the shrill whistle of the locomotive announced the approach of the long special train from Weltevreden, the principal military depot of the Dutch in the East Indies, the band struck up the King William march and the soldiers and their female housekeepers soon emerged from the cars and fell into line before the moorings of the Soorakarta. The major in charge of the transfer of troops at the Groote Boom was an imposing personage, whose brilliant uniform was adorned by the King William's decoration of the third-class. He made brief, set speeches to the departing troops in the Dutch, Malay and Javanese tongues, calling their attention

to the importance of their mission. While he was attempting to inspire the mercenaries with heroic aspirations, their coffee-hued female companions appeared entirely oblivious of the serious import of his words and kept up their babbling and giggling until the commandant's temper was carried away by indignation at the lack of respect shown his exalted station and he roared at them in a gin-soaked voice: "Diam lue! jangan gongon key andjing!" "Silence, rabble! don't bark like dogs!" This emphatic apostrophe produced the desired quiet, but also wry faces among the Amboinese who are very fond of canine roasts.

The major was not much liked by the soldiers who were acquainted with the manner in which he came to his blue-enameled decoration in the shape of a cross. While stationed at Samarang on Java, he was captain of a company composed chiefly of Swiss, Belgians and Frenchmen, who had formerly served in the Pope's guard and under Emperor Maximilian in Mexico. The tempting promises of Dutch recruiting officers induced them to enlist for the East Indian service. After their arrival on Java they found themselves disappointed—the common experience of Europeans in those quarters. They conspired to seize the armory at Samarang, but their plans were betrayed at the last moment and they were surrounded by native soldiers, put in irons, tried by a court martial and hung "as a warning example." The captain was decorated and promoted to command at the Groote Boom in Batavia.

At the close of the major's harangues, the sergeant-major called the roll of the European and Sinjo, or half-breed, soldiers, who went aboard one by one with their brown ladies and their children. Having the first choice of quarters, they selected the best places on the upper deck. When some of the women appeared on the gangway, with parrots on their shoulders and leading dogs by a string, the captain of the vessel refused to transport the pets and got into a mock altercation with the major, which ended in Poll and Sport being returned to the barracks at Weltevreden.

The whites and sinjos were followed by the "dog-eaters" from the Moluccas, or Spice Islands, who were known in the camps under the generic title of Amboinese. The Amboinese women are noted for their intelligence and good looks. Contrary to the existing law, some of them had arrayed themselves in neat white jackets, gilded slippers, silk stockings and other attractive feminine paraphernalia, which aroused the envy of the njonjas, who were the wives pro tempore of the officers during their stay in those climes and had some Caucasian blood in their veins. The njonjas possess the right to dress like their white sisters—which is denied to all women of pure Malay extraction in the Dutch East Indies, except on the Moluccas, where an exception is made on account of the early Christianization of the natives. This privilege of the Molucca



women, however, is held in abeyance by the government during their sojourn in other portions of the empire for reasons of economy as well as policy. On account of the additional expense entailed by the transportation of the women from the distant Moluccas, the government prefers to see the recruits from those islands selecting their female companions on Java. Besides, it dreads that a too glaring manifestation of the discriminations made between the various Malay nationalities under its sway might lead to serious difficulties. The *njonjas*, accordingly, appealed to the shout, or captain of the harbor police, and requested that dignitary to see to it that their handsome sisters from the Spice Islands at once doffed their tropical imitations of European garments and contented themselves with the modest attire prescribed for the

natives. The shout immediately ordered two of his native *prad-jurets*, whom the soldiers jestingly nicknamed "lemon-birds," on account of their blue, swallow-tailed coats with wide yellow borders, to remove the offensive decorations from the Molucca women. This was accomplished with neatness and dispatch, to the intense satisfaction of the *njonjas* and the Javanese women. The poor creatures, who were thus rudely reminded of the tyranny of Dutch rule, cried and howled at being robbed (their robes were confiscated) of their finery, and their male companions cursed and protested. All remonstrances were in vain, however, and some of the men who were loudest in their declamations were confined in the dark guard-room in the between-decks of the Soorakarta.

Half a company of coal black negroes and sparo-sparos, or mulattoes of African and Malay extraction, and their woolly-haired mates, called *lip-laps* or *hitam-manis* (the latter a jocular appellation meaning "the sweet blacks"), were the next to board the ship. The negroes, or Black Dutchmen, as the Javanese call them, are allowed full European rations, a liberal consumption of victuals being one of their dominant traits. The Amboinese are allowed to commute their rations and to adorn their quarters with all kinds of gaudy frippery, their tastes being more refined than those of the other Malays and of the negroes. The Javanese contingent was the last to embark and had to be content with the dirtiest and hottest places near the engine-room. The Javanese soldiers receive the poorest pay and treatment of all. Their rations are only about one-half of those of the others. They are not even permitted to wear shoes, although such would be a great protection to their feet in

forcing their way through the thorn-encompassed kampongs of the Achinese and Battahs.

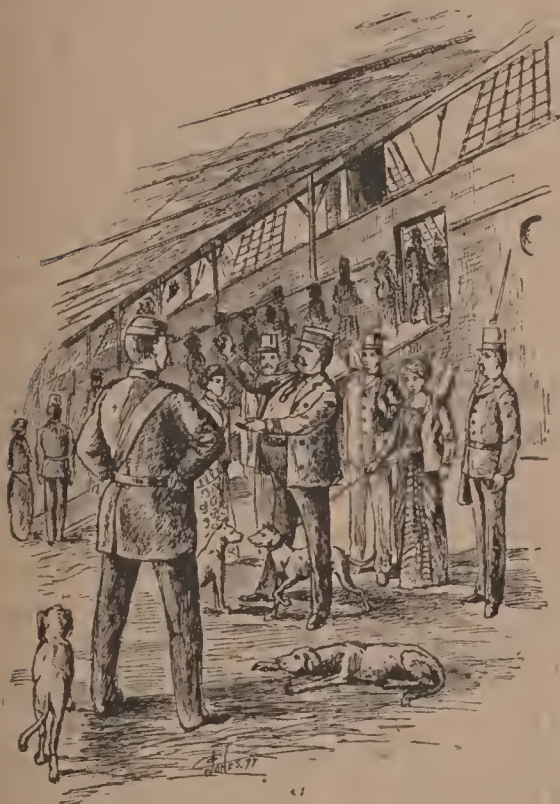
The hadjis, or Mohammedan priests,—the word includes all who have made the pilgrimage to Mecca,—bestowed their final blessings upon the departing Javanese soldiers, but entirely disregarded the females about to share the same hardships and dangers. The officers of the Eleventh battalion shook hands with their departing colleagues, the ship's cables were hauled in, the whistles blew, a gun was fired, the band played a farewell march and the Soorakarta steamed slowly through the roadstead. When she passed the guardship, the sailors on the latter climbed into the rigging and bade her a Godspeed with three loud hurrahs.

While the Soorakarta was ploughing her way through the forest of masts floating the flags of all nations in the harbor of Batavia, her human cargo filled the decks and waved a farewell in thought to the Pearl of the Indian Archipelago. The Europeans, who had recently come to these shores, meditated on their uncertain fate in almost unknown regions, while the natives, who were careless and of an easy-going disposition, recalled their pleasant life in their native kampongs and especially their removal from the garrison of Weltevreden to the scene of combat with pirates and cannibals. On Java, recruits as well as veterans are permitted to spend their leisure time with their families in bamboo huts of their own in the vicinity of the barracks.

An awning spread over the hurricane deck to ward off occasional light showers and the blistering rays of the sun cast its beneficent shade over a medley of nations, including representatives of nearly all

European countries and even a few American citizens, whose eyes clung to the last to the star-spangled banner waving proudly over the American consulate in Batavia, one of the most imposing structures in that city.

As soon as the Soorakarta was outside of the roadstead of Batavia and hurrying towards the Strait of Sunda, the soldiers and the women bestowed all their efforts upon making themselves comfortable in the various portions of the decks. The Javanese at once gave themselves up to playing dadoo, a game of dice, to which they are passionately devoted. On the main hatch, in the middle of the boat, Kromo Wonzo, a short and thickset Javanese private, and his wife Sarintin, both dressed in their best attire, were squatted Javanese



fashion, their lower extremities forming zigzags. Before them was spread out a large yellow reed mat divided by black lines into six equal squares, each of which was marked by a number. The six-cornered die, which is generally of bone, but occasionally of wood or silver, is pierced by a short piece of bamboo projecting about half an inch out of two opposite sides of the die. The tokan-dadoo, or proprietor of the gambling outfit, takes hold of the die at one of its projections, twirls it rapidly between his thumb and first finger and deposits it on a porcelain plate which is then immediately covered with a cocoanut shell. The participants in the game bet on either "high" or "low," the former being represented on the fields of the mat by figures four, five and six and the latter by one, two and three. Kromo Wonzo hailed from Cheribon, which is situated between Samarang and Batavia on the northern coast of Java. He had served twelve years in the army and wore on his coat a number of decorations for good behavior and valiant conduct. His wife was attired in a flowered sarong, a sea-green jacket



and a silk slendang with gold embroidery. Her fingers and ears displayed a profusion of diamonds, which are preserved as heirlooms in native families. Her lower lip protruded to a considerable extent in consequence of the enormous quid of betel in her mouth. She acted as her husband's cashier. Kromo, a big tom cat, who was supposed to bring them luck and had been smuggled aboard in her slendang by Sartin, sat between the couple and was occasionally petted by his mistress to cajole him into exerting his good will in behalf of them. In order to indicate that the game was by no means limited to small sums, Kromo Wonzo had piled up before him hundreds of silver guilders, a lot of

bank notes and a ponderous mass of copper coins. Many of his countrymen were soon gathered about Kromo Wonzo's gambling institution and displayed intense interest in the vicissitudes attending the throws of the die.

The Europeans formed small groups on the decks and whiled away the time at cards. The officers occupied reclining chairs and chatted with their *njonjas*, or drank champagne or gin, according to the ebb or tide in their exchequer. Here and there a stoical Chinaman, smoking his opium pipe, gazed with serene apathy upon the scene. The Javanese, who have an innate love for bathing, did not wish to deprive themselves of one of their principal pleasures and incessantly poured over their heads buckets full of sea water. This diversion thoroughly soaked the parcels of one of

the Celestials and compelled him, since his remonstrances were in vain, to remove himself and his belongings to another quarter of the vessel.

A score or two of Germans, some of whom were endowed with fair voices and would occasionally improvise a chorus, amused themselves with singing their favorite songs, not alone for their own delectation, but also to enlist the attention of their officers who would reward their vocal exhibitions with an extra bottle of gin whenever they concluded a medley of secular and sacred airs with satirical couplets poking fun at John Bull, the nearest neighbor of the Dutch in the Far East.

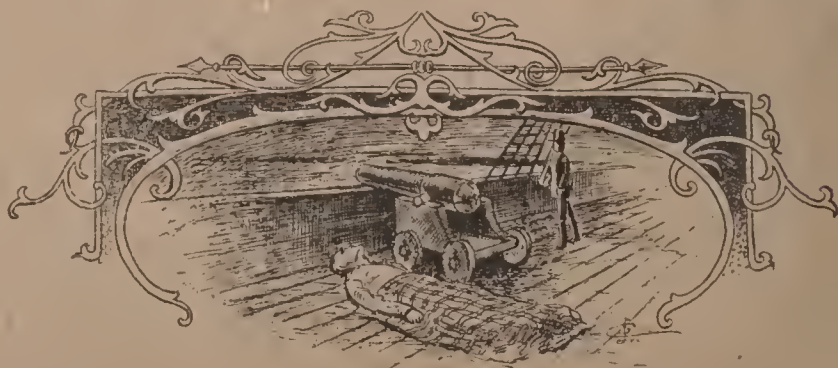
At five o'clock the bugler sounded the orlam, or the signal for the distribution of the evening grog. The European and African soldiers fell into line and each of them received a small tin cup full of gin. Immediately thereafter all the men passed through the kitchen to get their supper, which they took with them in their canteens. While the roll was being called, the Malays received boiled rice and tea and the whites and negroes tea and biscuits. A ripple of laughter was caused, when the names of a burly Dutchman and of a tall, thin Swiss were called. The former responded to the appellation of Mynheer Esshuis (Mr. Eathouse) and the latter to that of Gibli Saufhaus (Kid Drinkhouse). The men shared their victuals with their female companions on the decks and the feast resembled to some extent a picnic party, for the women had taken with them baskets containing delicious fruits, boiled eggs and other toothsome morsels not included in the regulation bill of fare. It was a genuine treat to all, because mosquitoes and other tormentors of the land were absent and a refreshing sea breeze greatly increased their appetites. Yet it were a mistake to suppose that a supper even under such auspicious circumstances, on a perfectly calm sea swallowing the fiery disk of the sun, who faintly illuminated the distant shore mountains of the southern extremity of Sumatra, and in an aromatic and inspiring atmosphere, went off as smoothly as the evening prayers of the half dozen hadjis on board, who were returning from their pilgrimage to Mecca and bowed their green-turbaned heads reverentially towards the Moslem shrine in the west. When the white soldiers squatted on the decks by the side of their dusky sirens, the latter perceived the penetrating odor of genuine Schiedam gin emanating from the throats of the warriors and at once inaugurated a series of curtain lectures, in which emphatic nouns and adjectives were by no means sparingly employed. Some of the men hastily swallowed a mouthful and gathered about a companion who worked a huge harmonica with all his might to drown the eloquence of the scolds.

The last rays of the setting sun colored the surface of the deep with an indescribable variety of tints. The intense blue of the sky rapidly assumed a darker tinge. The sun sank beneath the horizon

and in a few moments the stars appeared. It was night. The Southern Cross, the brightest constellation visible in that portion of the globe, for a time became the cynosure of many eyes. Although no tattoo was sounded on the transport, yet comparative quiet reigned soon after darkness had set in. The officers retired to their cabins and the others sought repose on their mats, covering themselves with light cotton sheets. Shortly before sunrise all were awakened, and rolled up their bedding to make way for the boatswain and his helpers who washed the decks with a hose.

The rising sun displayed the magnificent view of the Strait of Sunda, which separates the swampy lowlands of Bantam on Java from the rocky wilderness of Lampong on Sumatra. The remnant of the Island of Krakatau, which was destroyed by a volcanic submarine convulsion on the twenty-seventh day of August, 1883, appeared on the starboard side of the vessel. Before the catastrophe the island formed the pedestal of a large volcano which occasionally emitted smoke as if to warn all living things near it of the fiery terrors lurking beneath its lofty dome. On the morning of the fatal day volcanic eruptions and earthquake shocks were noticed from the Java shore, lava dust and darkness filled the air for many miles in the vicinity and lamps had to be lit in the houses of Batavia at noon. With a noise comparable only to the crash of doom, the volcano of Krakatau sank beneath the waves of the strait and caused a flood which buried more than 100,000 people in its embrace. The Island of Krakatau was formerly a stronghold of Malay pirates, but European gunboats have long since put an end to their molestations. The Strait of Sunda was an ideal place for pirates, because many vessels were constantly passing through it and frequently detained for a long period by head winds. At the time of the disaster, the inhabitants of the island were peaceful, devoting themselves to fishing and to the cultivation of spices. Not one of their number escaped death. When the Soorakarta passed the dark, forbidding lava rocks, many vestiges of the cataclysm were still seen clinging to them.

At night a brief stop was made at Bencoolen, one of the many safe and land-locked harbors on the western coast of Sumatra. A few passengers and a detachment of soldiers disembarked and a score of invalids were taken aboard for conveyance to the health resorts in the highlands of Padang. The Soorakarta then continued her voyage to Padang-Laut, or Padang by-the-Sea, without any other incident during the night than the death of a Javanese soldier, who was sleeping next to one of the guns on the upper deck and attracted no attention until he failed to get up after the gun was fired at sunrise.



CHAPTER II.

SI-WARDI.



WHEN the sun rose above the Gleh-Rajah, the "Mountains Royal," which run through the entire length of Sumatra and fall off in terraces to the sea on the west and to the swamps on the east, the Soorakarta cast anchor close to a wooded island guarding the entrance to a shallow cove, at the head of which the city of Padang-Laut lies in a depression of the shore-line snug and safe like a dog at the feet of its master. Viewed from the ocean, the entire western coast of Sumatra presents the aspect of an irregular mountain chain rising abruptly out of the sea and adorned to the very tops of its noblest peaks with the dense vegetation of untrodden virgin forests. The summits of Jongolo and Merapi, the former an extinct and the latter an active volcano, are visible in the clear atmosphere at a great distance to the north. Thin clouds of smoke, which have a fiery tinge at night, are uninterruptedly issuing from the bowels of Merapi. According to a native legend, the two wooded mountain giants dueled a long time for the hegemony until finally Merapi vanquished Jongolo, who thenceforth ceased to betray signs of life.

While the Soorakarta was waiting for the tugs and lighters to take ashore the troops and freight, the men were given permission to disport themselves for an hour or two on the island,—an opportunity seized with eagerness especially by the Javanese who were pining away to rid themselves of the soot and grease of their quarters near the engine room by plunging into the calm blue waters laving the sandy beach of the island. The latter resembled a sea-enclosed, well-kept park, for the luxuriant tropical undergrowth had been carefully pruned by the hand of man and intersected by gravel walks.

The men, especially the natives, hugely enjoyed the refreshing frolic in the briny shallows. Soon afterward the greater portion of the ship's population was landed at the piers of Padang-Laut, after an enjoyable ride on the placid bosom of an inlet flanked on either side by precipitous cliffs higher than the loftiest dome. Shortly before rounding a promontory, which prevented a view of the city from the sea, Monkey Island was passed. The latter is a small patch of land rising but a little above tide-water and peopled exclusively by monkeys which are held sacred by the Malays and are

protected by the government. A white soldier, who threw a stone at one of the animals while the troops were going ashore, was rebuked by a Javanese private, a disciple of Darwin without knowing it, who said to him: "Yangan boeang sama ito moenjet, sabobnja dia yedi orang yuka," "Do not throw at that monkey, because he is a man too."

The newly arrived troops were received at the landing place by the garrison band and conducted to the barracks, which were located several miles beyond the town on a flat expanse of ground traversed by a stream descending from the mountains. Before reaching the sea the stream is drawn off into numerous small channels irrigating the rice-fields in the vicinity.



The military camp of Padang-Laut consists of twelve large, airy, one-story brick buildings, which are surrounded by a stone wall. Each building contains two hundred iron bedsteads, arranged in two rows, for the accommodation of as many soldiers and their female companions. Their children, if any they had, were tucked away under the couches of the parents. Each bedstead was supplied with a mattress and a pillow, both filled with rice-straw, and with a reed

mat and a cotton quilt. The non-commissioned officers occupied separate apartments next to those of the men. The cooking was done in an airy shed chiefly by the women on grates consisting of four flat stones. On account of the liability to incur fever from the drinking of large quantities of water in that hot country, warm tea and coffee in big wooden tubs are always at the disposal of the men as a substitute. A dozen bath houses, built directly over the stream, were always well patronized, for under the equator a plunge into running water is a great luxury. Soldiers leaving or entering the barracks were searched at the guard-house, which commanded the only entrance to the camp. The washing was done by the women on the banks of the stream in the fashion of the natives. The wash is thoroughly soaked and scrubbed with soap in the stream and then beaten against a layer of stones. This operation causes many a shining button to desert its uniform.

The finest avenue of Padang-Laut extends from the piers to the barracks and is lined with a fine assortment of palms, tamarinds and other shade trees, which rear their crests above the homes of the Dutch civil and military officers, of the foreign consuls, the merchants and brokers, and some planters from the famous tobacco district of Deli. The residences along the avenue are built in the

native style and surrounded by beautiful gardens displaying the choicest floral products of tropical climes.

The city of Padang-Laut presents the usual aspect of a small seaport in the Dutch East Indies. The buildings, whether of white stone or red brick or bamboo, are almost without exception one story in height. Some of the streets are straight and some irregular and all are unpaved. The business population is composed mainly of Dutch exporters and Malay and Chinese shopkeepers. The inlet is alive with small and large fishing boats, sampans and prauws, manned by Malays. The chief center of activity is the *passar*, or bazaar, which is crowded from morning until midnight with a noisy, haggling crowd of natives of both sexes and of sailors and civilians of nearly all nations and of all shades of complexions and of costumes. Nearly everything in the line of merchandise can be obtained in the *passar*, where the needs and the vices of mankind are equally pampered to. Into this Oriental hive of industry strolled a



quartette of Europeans after obtaining leave to absent themselves from the barracks until tattoo. Charles Brullier, who had been in these quarters before, volunteered to guide his comrades, Jan Esshuis, August Wueppking and Daniel Schmidt, through the labyrinth of architectural oddities, and directed their steps to Lim Hoe's tonsorial establishment, where the deft fingers of the Chinaman and of his assistants beautified the faces and cleaned the ears of their patrons with a great array of little razors, brushes and tweezers. The saunterers then entered a restaurant, the proprietor of which, Sariman, was a Malay who had been a cook on sailing vessels flying the German and British flags and had acquired smatterings of several European tongues. On this account his place was much frequented by the soldiers and sailors stopping at Padang-Laut. As the Dutch government does not allow breweries to be erected in its East Indian possessions in order to secure a monopoly of the traffic in the amber fluid to its home market, beer is a very expensive luxury in those quarters, and consequently gin and palm-wine are the beverages most generally drunk by the soldiery.

After ordering absinthe for himself and gin for his companions, Brullier remarked: "I should not be surprised if there were some letters for me at the postoffice. If you will wait for me here, I will see about it and hurry back."

Twenty minutes later Brullier returned with a joyful expression

in his face and told his comrades: "I have received a letter from my brother, who owns a plantation at Paya-Kombo, through which we will pass on our march to Mandaheling. He invites our entire detachment to spend a day at his place. I can assure you that we will have a good time under his roof."

"Good!" the three others shouted in chorus.

"When is our company to leave for the interior?" Brullier inquired.

"At sunrise to-morrow," Esshuis replied.

"That suits me exactly," Brullier said; "for I do not like to tarry at this place any longer than is necessary for making a call at the home of my lost Si-Wardi and ascertaining whether her parents know what has become of her. They are Malay peasants and reside near the limits of the city. Will you accompany me?"

"Certainly!" was the unanimous response of Esshuis, Wueppking and Schmidt, who were as anxious to please their friend Brullier as

they were curious to learn something more about the history of the Malay woman whom the accomplished Brullier had succeeded in capturing in spite of the dangers connected with such a task.

Charles Brullier was the assumed name of Karl von Horn, an Austrian nobleman, who had left his native country some ten years ago and entered the German army. On account of an affair of honor he was obliged to flee soon afterwards and made for the Dutch border at Arnheim, where he sold his horse at a fair in progress at the time. With the proceeds of the sale he traveled to Liege, where he bought of a Jew a passport issued in

the name of one Charles Brullier. Of an adventurous disposition and tired of the annoying conventionalities of the old world, he enlisted in the Dutch East Indian service at Harderweyk and spent six years on the Achinese frontier. Shortly before he was mustered out, he was sent back to Java via Padang-Laut. While waiting in this seaport for the arrival of the transport, he passed part



of his time in sauntering about in the suburbs. One afternoon he stopped at a bamboo hut to quench his thirst with a cup of milk or wine. It was here that he met Si-Wardi, a Malay girl of sixteen years, whose light brown complexion reminded Brullier of Southern European types. She was tall, lithe and of perfect proportions. The beauty of her oval face was heightened by soft black eyelashes which shaded a pair of large and lustrous almond-shaped eyes. Her hands and feet were small, a characteristic of the Malay race. Her teeth were of pearly whiteness and had been filed down into two perfectly symmetrical rows in accordance with the custom prevailing in those countries. Si-Wardi was the only daughter of an aged Malay couple who cultivated a tract of land in the vicinity of Padang-Laut. When Brullier addressed her in Malay, the lingua franca of the East Indies, which he spoke very fluently, purple blushes shone through her brown cheeks, giving her an extraordinarily fresh and innocent appearance. Brullier was thoroughly smitten with her charms and, being familiar with the usages of the Malays, lost no time in idle and pompous declarations of undying affection, nor did he employ the arts and blandishments acquired in the polite capitals of Western Europe to gain possession of the sweet creature, but merely said in a voice throbbing with passion:

"Kowe mow kassi kowepunja ati manis?" "Will you give me your sweet heart?"

"Mau tuan! saja suca sekali sama kowe." "Yes, sir, I love you very much," was Si-Wardi's answer, who, while making a step forward toward her new lord, bowed deeply and lowered her folded hands. Brullier covered her hands with his own and pressed his forehead for a moment against hers, but, although fairly carried away with delight at his rapid success, refrained from sealing the bond with passionate kisses or gentle embraces, because such is not the custom of the Orientals. Si-Wardi and Brullier then went to her parents, who were working in a nearby field, and asked their consent, which was given after Brullier had paid the father a round sum of money. The latter

begged him to leave the country as soon as possible and with the utmost secrecy, in order to protect the girl from the persecution of the fanatical hadjis, who hound to death every Malay woman of Menang-Kebau, who as much as converses with or receives a gift, however trifling, from one not of their creed. Brullier heeded the advice and hastened with his bride to Java, after bribing the ser-



geant-major to allow him to take aboard the transport his fair companion without going through a lot of irksome formalities.

Soon after the arrival of the couple at Weltevreden, Brullier, whose term of service had expired, re-enlisted and spent a year of unalloyed bliss with his affectionate and faithful Malay beauty in a pretty little bamboo cottage in the vicinity of the barracks of that place. One evening Brullier, upon his return from guard duty, found his gentle mate missing. Diligent inquiries revealed to him the fact that she had been carried off by a hadji. He shuddered at the thought, which his calm reason told him was well founded, that the fanatical priesthood had at last secured their victim who had dared to disregard their dictates, and dreaded the worst for his beloved one. He succeeded in getting himself transferred to service on the Achinese frontier, hoping that while stopping for a day or two at Padang-Laut, he might gain some information concerning the fate of her, whose memory was deeply enshrined in his heart.

Brullier and his comrades soon reached Si-Wardi's parental roof and entered. The old people were exceedingly astonished to see him again and bade him and his companions welcome with Oriental hospitality. Brullier noticed a strange sadness in the countenances of the aged couple and an intuitive apprehension of the truth flashed through his mind.

"Deri mana Si-Wardi?" "Where is Si-Wardi?" he asked in an almost trembling tone of voice.

"Allah tobat! dia jedi mati soeda lama." "God have mercy on us! she is dead long ago," was the father's reply.

Si-Wardi's mother then informed Brullier that soon after the latter's departure the hadjis got wind of Si-Wardi's escapade and detailed one of their number to bring her back, dead or alive. Hadji Abu, one of the most remorseless and fanatical Mohammedan priests, was entrusted with the task. By approaching Si-Wardi during Brullier's absence from his cottage and working on her religious prejudices, he succeeded in finally inducing her to return with him to Sumatra. The hadji had no sooner reached home with his victim than he cut her throat and threw her body into a mountain stream.

Brullier, though by no means addicted to sentimentality, was yet for the moment crushed by the recital of the story of the end of the lovely Si-Wardi, to whom he had been fondly attached and whose possession flattered his pride. When he realized to its full extent the wrong done him and his dead mistress by the crafty hadjis, he gave vent to his wrath in the most unmeasured terms and his comrades experienced great difficulty in getting him to calm himself sufficiently to return with them to the camp. On their way back, they stopped at a tavern and assisted Brullier in partially drowning his grief in torrents of gin. In consequence, when they reached

the barracks, Esshuis was barely able to stand on his feet and ten small flasks of gin, which he had concealed about his person and attempted to smuggle into the barracks, were confiscated and he himself locked up in the guard-house for the night.



CHAPTER III.

A VARIEGATED CONVOY.



WHEN the reveille was sounded at five o'clock the next morning, the troops brought over by the Soorakarta bestirred themselves to get into the best possible condition for the tedious journey before them. Their destination was the military post of Mandaheling, which it would require about a fortnight's marching to reach. At seven o'clock the convoy was in motion. As the general marching order insisted merely on the troops reaching a particular place on a certain day, and did not require an advance in solid columns, the men as well as the women were at liberty to accelerate or retard their steps at pleasure. The first to take the dusty highway was a division of some fifty two-wheeled ox-carts, containing munitions and provisions for the troops at the front. The grobacs, or carts, were drawn each by a pair of sapis, or East Indian oxen, which are distinguished by a large fatty hump directly back of their necks. Each cart was manned by a Javanese driver armed with a rattan cane, with which he incessantly belabored the backs of the beasts while exhorting them to greater speed with an occasional "ayou madjoo," "make haste!" at the top of his voice. The jehus were clothed in short blue cotton trousers barely reaching to the knees. About the loins they wore the conventional sarongs, or plaids, which displayed a many-colored array of fantastic plants and animals, especially dragon heads. The sarong is held in place by a leather belt supporting the hilt of a kris, or Javanese dagger. The jehus wore light jackets of indefinite color and turbans matching the sarongs in hue. Javanese turbans are distinguished from those of other nations by a triangular projection reaching down the forehead to where the eyelashes meet.

The carts themselves resembled miniature houses on wheels, for the intersection of the axle and the pole formed the center of gravity for the square wagon box, from the four corners of which wooden poles supporting a thatched roof to shield the driver from the merciless glare of the sun projected. Armed guards flanked the grobac division and kept a sharp lookout on the drivers and their loads. The children and women who were too weak to walk filled a few of the conveyances which were wending their way over the verdant hills, across the cultivated plateaux and past the brink of

the countless ravines in that highly disrupted mountain country.

The rest of the detachment was afoot. The men as well as the women separated into groups of three or more of the same sex and carried on animated conversations while they panted along under the scorching sun. No attempt to preserve any kind of marching order was made. The men sometimes walked ahead and sometimes fell back of the teams, and occasionally exhorted the women to wing their steps. The female contingent was nearly as numerous as the male, which was about three hundred strong, and presented interesting material for a study in complexions other than Caucasian. The coffee-hued Javanese damsels wore flowered sarongs reaching from the waist to the ankles, light cotton jackets of the same pattern and silver girdles, the links of which consisted of Dutch rixthalers. Wound diagonally around the body from hips to shoulders were the slendangs, which were worn by all the women and were long and wide shawls of a mixture of silk and cotton and used for the easy conveyance of small sacks filled with boiled rice and dried meat. In their ear-lobes the Javanese wore large, gold-plated, flat rings beset with diamonds. The dress of the Amboinese women was very much like that of the Javanese, but evinced a daintier taste and better care. The hitam-manis, or negroes varying in hues from the genuine African type to the quadroon, were distinguished by their love of flaming colors, their sarongs being red and their jackets striped white and red. Their sarongs were held in place by means of a cord instead of a girdle. The negroes and the Amboinese carried stretched over their heads big Chinese parasols made of oiled paper, not so much for the sake of protecting their complexions against the sun as for the pleasure of indulging their vanity. The Javanese women besmear their faces with a solution of lime to prevent them from acquiring a deeper bronze. All the females were barefooted and bareheaded and the children on the ox-carts wore white shirts, their only garments, as an emblem of the inroads of Caucasian civilization.

All the men except the officers and the guards were unarmed and wore blue linen trousers, white linen shirts, blue jackets and tall cloth caps with wide shades for the eyes. They carried knapsacks on their backs. Dangling at their sides were square leather cases suspended by straps running across the shoulders. All the soldiers except the Javanese wore shoes.

The rear was formed by about fifty chain-boys, mostly Javanese sentenced to penal labor for chicken-stealing, burglary, running amuck, and other crimes. They wore blue uniforms and black turbans. Around their necks were iron rings which were fastened to a chain at night in order to prevent their escape.

No halt was made until the kadoo, or rest-station, of Dookoo-Waloo was reached at four o'clock in the afternoon, until which time the convoy slowly made its way through the gorgeous and

romantic scenery of the rugged Gleh-Rajah. The narrow, dusty highway, covered alternately with yellow sand, red clay and gravel, described a tortuous path around steep mountain ledges, past giddy ravines and canyons and across occasional level tracts of land, the sites of villages and plantations. Except where the hand of man had made a clearing, the entire country, including its crags, gorges, hills and mountains, was covered with an impenetrable mass of dark green foliage. The roar of mountain torrents rushing through ravines hundreds of feet below the road fell like weird music upon the ears of the marchers. Occasionally a far off cascade, glittering like a silver braid in the noonday sun, became visible and interrupted the stillness of a peaceful valley with its thunder.

The branches of the primeval forest on either side of the road

frequently overlap and form a shady bower. The silence reigning in the jungle, or rembu, as it is called on Sumatra, in the daytime is rarely interrupted except by the continuous buzzing and humming of insects and the occasional screeching of the numerous monkeys. The absence of flowers in tropical forests is atoned for by the indescribably aromatic odors emanating from the cinnamon trees, the vanilla bushes and other spice plants, and by the myriads of butterflies and dragon-flies of all hues and sizes disporting themselves in the sunlight. One of the few flowers blossoming all the year 'round is the melatti, a



large, white, bell-shaped flower, which the native women pick and crush and put into their hair in place of perfumery. The kombang-melatti possesses a peculiarly strong, aromatic, almost intoxicating odor. The chief pest annoying the marchers was the morute, a kind of very small mosquito, which is in evidence during the day only. Its bite produces large red boils, which are very painful. Fans and handkerchiefs were kept in continual motion to ward it off. Every now and then, an uler-mera, a small, copper-hued poisonous snake, which had crawled over the edge of the forest to

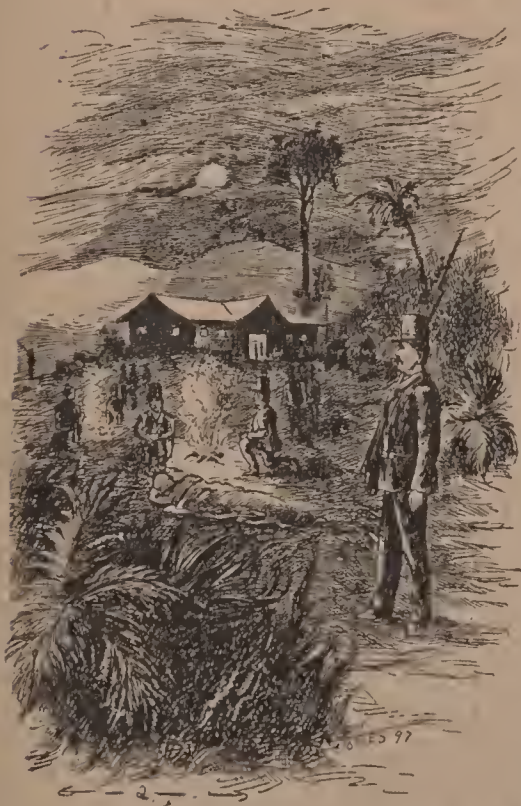
sun itself in the road, would be picked up by a Javanese soldier and tossed aside. Their manner of handling this reptile is unique and almost incredible. As the Javanese invariably go barefooted, they acquire a remarkable degree of dexterity and nimbleness in their feet. Thus, they will seize an uler-mera by the neck with their great and first toes as in a vise and hurl it back into the bushes.

After a nine hours' tiresome march the convoy suddenly emerged from the circuitous mountain path into a broad table-land, extending on one side to the sea and bordered on the others by peaks of the Gleh-Rajah. To the right was a kadoo and to the left, on a mountain slope, a hospital for native soldiers. In the distance, coffee, tea and tobacco plantations and rice-fields became visible. The oxen were unharnessed and allowed to graze, and the carts moved closely together about the kadoo. The members of the entire convoy hastened to deposit their luggage and a portion of their clothing on the reed mats in the kadoo and recuperate from the fatigues of the day by taking a bath in the cool waters of a nearby stream.

The njonjas of the officers had reached the place before the convoy and secured quarters at the residence of the doctor in charge of the hospital. They traveled in light carriages drawn by small horses of Sumatran breed, called kooda-alooos.

Before sundown the supper of rice, savor (a kind of sauce), dinging (dried meat), tea and coffee, was disposed of. Most of the soldiers retired to sleep soon after they had eaten their fill, while the others preferred to spend several hours in the fresh night air blowing gently from the mountains. The women passed the time chatting, smoking cigarettes, which they twisted with great skill, and playing with Javanese cards. Many of the native soldiers were squatted about the kadoo in small groups and played at dice. Kromo Wonzo, whose acquaintance we made on board of the Soorakarta, was a conspicuous figure in the crowd. When it grew dark, he secured two lamps from the custodian of the kadoo, and placed them on either side of his gambling outfit, which was spread out on the grass. While at Padang-Laut, he made an unsuccessful attempt to be sent to the hospital on the plea of some feigned disease, but he failed in deceiving the examining surgeon on that occasion and was compelled to follow

his comrades in their tramp through the Gleh-Rajah. In the early part of the evening Kromo Wonzo did a rushing business, the jehus,



soldiers and even the women risking their stalis, sukus and guilders on "high" and "low." Later on Brullier appeared on the scene with his comrades and asked him whether there was any limit to the game. Kromo Wonzon informed him that he had sufficient money to bet against any amount that Brullier might wish to stake. Brullier chanced his money on "high," losing successively twenty-five, fifty and seventy-five guilders. While Kromo Wonzon was twirling the die for the fourth time, Brullier changed his tactics, and placed the balance of his money, more than four hundred guilders, on "low." He won, breaking Kromo Wonzon's bank, who was derisively jeered at by Brullier's companions and his own countrymen. The lucky winner generously tossed a few guilders at him to enable him to continue his operations.

Directly after the sun had gone down in the silvery waves of the distant Indian ocean, which was visible from the plateau of Dookoo-Waloo, the denizens of the forest began their evening concert. At first, swarms of mosquitoes, attracted by the odor of the victuals, appear and fill the air with their monotonous song. Then come the fireflies, illuminating the darkness with their phosphorescent glow. In the hollow bamboo posts of the kadoo, the lizards, whose hides present a blending of many colors with red spots on their backs, begin to emit from time to time their "rrrrrrrh, rrrrrrh, chackoo, chackoo," which a newly arrived European would be tempted to mistake for the mutterings of a parrot. The natives never disturb these reptiles which feed on mosquitoes. The numerous bands of monkeys next begin their evening stroll from branch to branch, the females holding their young in the fore-arms, in quest of a brook to quench their thirst. Monkeys are very abundant in Sumatra and there is no escape from their screeching. The dismal howl of the wild dogs, with which the country abounds, is mingled with the occasional roar of a tiger in search of a stray deer or sheep. In the kadoo itself, which was nothing more than a big palm-log cabin capable of sheltering several hundred people, and in charge of a mandoor, or overseer, who kept a small store at one end of it, a few Javanese lamps lit up the faces of the sleepers. Sentinels paced to and fro on all sides of the kadoo and wagon-yard and shouted every half hour "all's well."

Before the night was far advanced, the moon rose above the dark outlines of the mountains and lit up the landscape. Of a sudden, the roar of a tiger was followed by the report of a gun and considerable curiosity was manifested by those who were still awake about the kadoo, as to who the bold hunter venturing forth at that hour of the night might be. A native, who had repeatedly passed through this part of the island, informed the European sentinels that Soorayam was probably engaged in tiger-hunting. This fearless maiden was the daughter of a Malay rajah in the district of Menang-Kebau, who perished in battle against the Dutch. She

was a woman of the strong-minded type, preferring an independent life in the wilderness to the subserviency of a Mohammedan wife. Although above want or the fear of want, she lived in a lonely bamboo dwelling in a mountain glen, supplied herself with the necessities of life from the nearest villages and followed tiger hunting as a pastime. The natives revered her as a saint, for once, when the monarchs of the wilderness had become very bold and even invaded kampongs and carried off human beings, she gave chase to the beasts, many of which were laid low by her unerring aim.



CHAPTER IV.

A JAVANESE MOTHER-IN-LAW.



LIEUTENANT Schwarzenberg, who commanded the convoy, spent the night with his wife Augusta at the hospital surgeon's residence, a large bamboo house surrounded on all sides by a wide covered veranda and trellises along which climbing plants mounted to the low, overhanging roof. Their host, Mynheer van Leuwen, had been in charge of the hospital for a decade and made his abode very comfortable. His duties consisted in looking after some three hundred native soldiers who were suffering from wounds or the diseases peculiar to the lowlands of Sumatra, cholera, berri-berri and others, and were sent to Dookoo-Waloo to regain their health, while their white comrades in arms were sent to Fort de Kock, which is situated further up the mountains and has a much cooler climate.

On the evening of the convoy's arrival, Augusta and Si-Rama, the surgeon's wife, enjoyed the cool night air on the veranda which commanded a fine view of the plain encircled on nearly all sides by the slopes of the Gleh-Rajah and through a wide fissure in which the distant Indian ocean appeared like a vast inky pall spread over a depression in the earth's surface. Si-Rama was about twenty-five years of age, while Augusta was still in her teens, having but recently been taken out of a convent by her military lord and made his wife, on the strength of a mere promise and without much ceremony, according to the prevailing custom. While the women were discussing the latest Batavian scandals and the newest Parisian styles, their husbands puffed away at Manila cigars and conversed on a variety of topics.

After the surgeon had satisfied the lieutenant's curiosity concerning some unimportant military matters, of which he had heard through the patients under his care, the lieutenant remarked:

"I presume, doctor, you are having rather a pleasant time of it on your isolated mountain, where your word is law."

"We certainly do not have to worry ourselves to death up here," Mynheer van Leuwen replied, "as the inmates of our health station are all natives, who either recover very rapidly or go to the better world without making much fuss about it. Most of them are afflicted with berri-berri, a disease resembling dropsy, which is ex-

tremely common in the lowlands and curable if not too far advanced. A white hospital steward and his assistants relieve me from all arduous work except that of supervision and an occasional operation. Otherwise, I enjoy considerable leisure, which, as you will have perceived by this time, is a great boon in this climate, where even nervous and restless people soon learn to appreciate the delights of *dolce far niente*. Dookoo-Waloo is a pretty healthy spot and my position almost an ideal one for a man who does not hanker much after the accessories of European civilization. I occasionally treat a Malay dignitary for some trouble against which his native remedies have proved ineffectual. Some time ago I restored the vision of the chief of the village adjoining the cascade you see dashing down yon precipice in the distance. He was exceedingly grateful and compelled me to accept an extraordinary fee in the form of gifts consisting of diamonds and precious stones and spread about his countrymen rumors of the supernatural powers which he fancies I possess. If I ever should take it into my head to spend my declining years elsewhere, I will take with me more than my salary."



"We officers," the lieutenant said, "are not so fortunate. Unless we succeed in obtaining promotion and in being entrusted with special missions, where the *douceurs* are worth while accepting, we have little opportunity of acquiring wealth, except in a manner unworthy of a soldier or a gentleman. Yet an officer, who is compelled to rely exclusively on his pay to meet the expenses connected with his rank, would be a fool to remain here for a great length of time, because fevers and insects would rapidly enervate his system and destroy his ambition. I was told at Batavia that at a certain garrison the officers always smoked the most expensive brands of cigars and were fastidious even about the label of their champagne. These and other luxuries were furnished them gratis by a Chinese army contractor for the privilege of supplying the post with pro-

visions, the quality of which, of course, was not up to the standard demanded by the government. The privates usually know better than to remonstrate against this unfair treatment and to court the danger of being blacklisted as 'kickers.' The officers themselves must be very guarded in their expressions on this topic for fear of incurring the ill-will of some of their less conscientious colleagues. I heard of a newly arrived lieutenant, a Prussian, who made some truthful but injudicious remarks about the quality of the rations furnished his men and was soon compelled to send in his resignation to escape the ostracism of his colleagues."

"This is not an uncommon occurrence," observed the surgeon. "I learned of an opposite case, however, which happened on the Achinese frontier recently. The soldiers of a white company grumbled about their food and complained to the captain. The captain, who was in collusion with the contractors, warned them not to again appear before him with complaints of that nature, but the men succeeded in interesting their lieutenants in the matter, who brought the case before a higher military authority which ordered a court martial ending in the captain's dishonorable discharge. But such things are soon forgotten in this indolent land. By the way, lieutenant, if I may ask, where did you pick up your charming njonja?"

"Same old story," the lieutenant answered, "left old loves and debts behind me in Vienna, got a commission from the Dutch government, colleagues at Batavia posted me on customs of this blooming climate, put on solemn airs, drove to convent at Samarang, talked with fat priest, promised everything and picked out Njonja Augusta, who reminded me more than any other of the convent girls of the lively maids I left behind me on the Danube. I presume you went through the same performance."

"Exactly," the doctor said with a smile, "and I think we were both lucky in our choice. No relatives, no mother-in-law, in fact, no impediments of any kind to mar the enjoyment of the exclusive attention of our olive-hued beauties. Think of all the red tape wasted in the old country to tie down Cupid as with anchor chains! How different here! Take your choice and no questions asked, is the rule. The njonjas age more rapidly than their white sisters, but they are very submissive and affectionate if moderately well treated. Curtain lectures? I could not realize such an idea."

Njonja Augusta was a rather handsome woman of sixteen or seventeen years, medium height and light yellow complexion harmonizing with her brown eyes and black hair. She wore a white jacket bordered by lace and a gold-braided sarong reaching from the waist to the ankles and held in place by a gilded girdle. Her gold-embroidered slippers hid small, daintily shaped feet encased in white silk hose. Her hands displayed one or more diamond rings on each of the fingers, and diamonds also glittered in her ear-drops.

Her long hair was done up in a knot and adorned with roses and melattis gathered in the hospital garden.

Si-Rama was attired in nearly the same fashion as her guest.

She was shorter in stature and considerably stouter, an emblem of her more advanced age. Her eyes were blue and her hair dark brown.

The women were munching the delicious aromatic durian fruit, to taste which is, in the language of an eminent naturalist, alone worth a visit to the tropics, and recalling scenes of their convent life.

Augusta's father had been a non-commissioned officer, an Austrian by the name of Radetzky, who fell at Samalanga in a skirmish with the Achinese. Her mother was a Javanese by the name of Si-Idup, from whom a priest took the four year old girl at the death of the father and placed her in a convent, where she was taught to sing, pray, sew, embroider and the rudimentary branches of knowledge, until the gallant and dashing lieutenant took a fancy to her and

relieved her from the monotonous company of the nuns. Si-Rama had been brought up in the same convent and was pleased to hear of the changes that had taken place in that institution since the doctor had appeared within its white stone walls and claimed her in Oriental knight-errant style.

"You must be very happy with your young and accomplished officer," Si-Rama remarked to Augusta; "he appears to be a shining specimen of a European cavalier, dignified, courteous, affectionate and much devoted to you."

"Yes, but I detest these long and tedious journeys over dusty roads and through monotonous forests and mountains, where one only occasionally meets a friend like yourself with whom one can talk a few sensible words. I wish we were arrived at our destination, where there is a big garrison, many officers and njonjas, balls and theaters, and a grand reception at the controller's palace once a week."

"You will enjoy all these things soon enough," Si-Rama said; "for the present you ought to be contented with having escaped from the dismal convent walls, the sour-faced nuns and the bald-headed priests, and with enjoying the love of a member of the élite and the many strange sights in this wild and great island. If you are fond of a fine drive to a pretty scene, I will ask my laki (husband) to order the carriages in readiness to take us all, at an early hour to-morrow morning, to the beautiful cascade, the spray of



which is carried by the wind close to the Malay village of Kotta Kedang, where the natives possess a very light brown complexion, blond hair and blue eyes. They are Mohammedans, but are not as fanatic as the other Malays."

"With pleasure do I accept your invitation, my dear," Augusta replied, "for where thou goest, I go."

The employment of biblical phrases on all possible occasions is a habit common to most *njonjas* who are brought up in convents, where the singing of hymns and praying constitutes the chief part of their education.

Before retiring the party adjourned to the parlor, where the women alternately thumped the popular airs of the day on the piano and accompanied each other with their thin soprano voices.

After the morning inspection was over, Lieutenant Schwarzenberg instructed Timothy Slonderwacht, his eldest sergeant, to proceed with the convoy on the road to Padang-Pandjäng, where they were expected to arrive before nightfall. The surgeon and the lieutenant and their wives then entered two light carriages and were driven at a rapid rate to the foot of a cascade formed by a brook tumbling over a precipice some five hundred feet high, and then meandering through the plantations with which the plain was dotted. The force of the water had hollowed out the rocks at the base, where the spray dashing in all directions gave the trees and shrubs on the banks of the stream a tinge of the most wonderfully fresh green. After descending to a few other terraces in the same manner, the stream finally fell over the steep coast cliffs into the Indian ocean. The roar of the waterfall drowned the voices of the visitors who halted on the shady side of a big tree and breathed in the cool draught produced by the clouds of spray.

The party then repaired to the Malay village of Kotta Kedang, where the doctor intended to visit the *kapella kampong*, or village chief, who had placed himself under his treatment. The village consisted of about thirty bamboo houses constructed in the native style, with the exception, however, that the *atap* roofs were protected from the decaying influences of the climate by a zinc covering which was especially useful in keeping out the frequent heavy rains. Kotta Kedang contrasted favorably with other Malay *kampongs* by its greater evidences of prosperity and cleanliness and especially by the absence of offensive smells. The lighter complexion of the inhabitants was accounted for by the fact that a century and a half ago a Dutch sea captain, who had grown tired of sailing and taken a fancy to the place, made it his home, adopted the polygamous habits of the Mohammedan Malays and became the sire of a numerous progeny, in whom the admixture of Caucasian blood was plainly visible. The captain died at the advanced age of one hundred and twenty years and was interred at Fort de Kock, where the inscription on the tombstone erected to his memory

pleads for the salubrity of that region by accentuating the long years of life allotted the deceased captain.

The surgeon stepped into the house of the kapella kampong and the ladies, escorted by the lieutenant, sauntered about the village. Seated on a bench beneath the low eaves of a hadji's house were two women, one of whom wore the conventional veil of the Mohammedan women, while the face of the other was uncovered. Instead of the veil, the latter wore the green turban, indicating that she had visited the tomb of the prophet at Mecca. Si-Idup, the green-turbaned woman, had a careworn but good-natured appearance. She was displaying to the hadji's wife samples of herbs supposed to possess medicinal virtues. Attracted by curiosity, the njonjas walked up to the two women and began a conversation with them after the usual suave and prolix introductory Oriental greetings, while the lieutenant out of respect kept himself at a slight distance. Si-Idup, who was scrutinizing Augusta very closely, suddenly asked her:

"Whence do you come?"

"From Batavia, and I am on the way to Mandaheling with my husband," Augusta replied.

Si-Idup passed her hand over her forehead as if attempting to resurrect an ancient memory out of time's cobweb layers, and said:

"Your features appear very familiar to me. I must have seen you before."

In response to further inquiries on the part of the old Javanese woman, Augusta told her of her convent life and her union with Lieutenant Schwarzenberg. Si-Idup's eyes seemed to grow larger and larger and animated by a strange fire when she finally asked the njonja:

"Do you recollect who brought you to the convent?"

"My recollection of my earlier years is very dim," Augusta answered; "but I still have in my mind a vivid picture of an old fat priest. He came to the convent at Samarang occasionally and I remember him wrangling with a Javanese woman about something, probably myself, and then taking me to the convent, where he left me in charge of the nuns."

Augusta then told her of what she knew by hearsay of her father. Of her mother she knew nothing, her identity having been carefully concealed from her and the mother herself having been informed in reply to all her inquiries concerning the fate of her daughter that she was being educated in Europe.

Si-Idup remained silent for a few moments, while gazing intently upon the figure and features of the younger woman, before asking her:

"Have you not a large brown birthmark on your left arm, directly below the shoulder?"

"So it is," Augusta replied; "but how do you come to ask this question?"

"Because," Si-Idup replied, her eyes rapidly growing moist, "because you are my daughter, my darling Selima, whom they took away from me when she was a little tot and secreted in a gloomy convent, telling me all the while that she had been sent to Negri-Blanda."

Njonja Augusta and her mother soon convinced themselves that they were not mistaken in the apprehension of their relationship. They sat down beside each other and wept for joy. Augusta, who knew what it was to have a mother only by hearsay, was glad of the event for another reason. Her husband had told her to look out for a suitable servant for herself as soon as they reached their place of destination, and as she was not overfond of bothering about household cares, she keenly relished the idea of leaving such trifling affairs to her newly-found mother, who would undoubtedly deem it an honor to be entrusted with them and content herself with the proud consciousness of being the mother of a pretty njonja who had made a good match. When the lieutenant saw the affecting scene of reunion, he approached the women and was made aware of the valuable accession to his household, an event entirely pleasing to him, for it relieved his beloved Augusta of many cares and allowed her to devote herself exclusively to their mutual entertainment.



CHAPTER V.

AN AMBOINESE OTHELLO.



HE lieutenant and his wife, accompanied by Si-Idup, hastened to overtake the convoy, while the surgeon and his wife returned to their hermitage on the mountain. Sergeant Slonderwacht, a big fat burly Dutchman, who was extremely proud of being entrusted by the lieutenant with the temporary command of the transport, marched at the head of the column which was ascending the hills hiding from view Padang-Pandjang, the next halting place. Towards noon, the Malay kampong of Sibri was reached. In the meantime, the lofty peaks of Jongolo and Merapi "put on their caps," as the natives say, that is, they became enveloped by a dense veil of clouds, a sure sign that a rainstorm was imminent. As there is little pleasure in getting soaked to the skin by a tropical shower, Slonderwacht commanded his subordinates to remain in the village until the sky was clear again. Accordingly, an hour's rest was taken under Malay roofs, while the rain came down in torrents. Slonderwacht selected a secluded spot behind a bamboo hut and slowly emptied his field flask of its contents, his favorite beverage, gin. Corporal Feldhuis, who worshipped Venus rather than Bacchus, frequently took off his cap to permit the women to admire his magnificent blond locks and his big blue eyes, which he considered irresistible to any black, brown, bronze or olive-hued female in the East Indian Archipelago. While standing about a warong, where some Malay tradesmen were selling delicacies to the hungry members of the expedition, he espied an Amboinese woman, who was affecting the bashful demeanor of her white sisters, timidly coming his way, as though in search of something or somebody.

Feldhuis, who believed with Caesar in the *veni, vidi, vici* method, had no sooner rested his eyes on her tall and graceful figure, than he stepped up to her and invited her to a dish of pisang-goreng (fried bananas) and liquid refreshments. Mariana, such was her name, was the wife of Juro di Kromo, a Christian Amboinese soldier of the convoy. She smiled blandly with her small, well-formed mouth, displaying two rows of pearly teeth, and accepted without saying a word the flattering invitation of the blond Dutchman. While she was finishing her luncheon with a cup of savory palm-wine, her

spouse drew near and asked her to join him. She refused to obey at once, saying that she would be with him after a while. Juro di Kromo passed on, not wishing to incur the displeasure of his superior. Feldhuis and Mariana soon parted after having made an appointment to meet each other near the barracks of Padang-Pandjang in the evening. A feeling of jealousy was aroused in Juro di Kromo's heart and studiously fed by the jeering remarks of his comrades.



The picturesque village of Sibri comprised a cluster of bamboo houses resting on posts six feet above the ground. The dwellings have high-pitched roofs and overhanging eaves and are frequently covered with carved work exhibiting occasionally good taste, especially in the district of Menang-Kebau, where the natives are in a rather prosperous condition. The houses are devoid of furniture, the place of chairs, benches and beds being supplied by mats. Their couches consist of reed mats stretched across skeleton tables made of bamboo sticks, called bali-bali. The floor is made of split bamboo and is a shaky affair.

The village would be a model of cleanliness but for the stinking mudholes, used as receptacles for all waste matter, under the houses. The village is surrounded by a high fence as a protection against tigers and thieves.

When the rain subsided and the sun poured its vertical rays upon the countless pools of water formed in the village street, the earth appeared to be steaming and the air was filled with a strong earthy odor. Slonderwacht roused himself from his stupor and again took his place at the head of the column on its march to Padang-Pandjang, which is situated on a hilly tract surrounded by mountains and was reached after the lapse of several hours. The lieutenant overtook the convoy shortly after the latter emerged from Sibri, and resumed command.

Padang-Pandjang is a recruiting station and an important military depot. In its capacious barracks the members of the convoy were quartered in the same manner as at Padang-Laut. In the canteen Brullier, Esshuis, Saufhaus, Schmidt and Corporal Feldhuis were drinking, singing and reimbursing themselves with outbursts of hilarity for the fatigues of the march. Feldhuis attracted some attention by drinking very sparingly and soon left the canteen. Sergeant Slonderwacht dropped in at 9 o'clock and informed Brullier and Schmidt that they had to do guard duty in the corridors of the barracks of the white soldiers for the night.

Tattoo was sounded half an hour later, the canteen was closed and the guests retired to their quarters.

Brullier, who stood guard at a side door, observed that Corporal Feldhuis did not appear with the sergeant when the latter called the roll and gave out the orders for the next day. After the sergeant had gone, Brullier whispered to Schmidt, who was posted on the opposite entrance, that Feldhuis must have gone to a tête-à-tête with Mariana, the fair Amboinese. Brullier's suspicions proved correct, for at an appointed hour the corporal and the Amboinese woman met beneath the dark shade of a tall waringi tree a short distance from the row of barracks and gave themselves up to the indulgence of their illicit desires.

Juro di Kromo did not immediately notice the absence of his wife after the roll had been called in his quarters,—for the women are not allowed in the barracks until after that event,—and consoled himself for some time with the thought that she might have been delayed by one thing or another. He was addicted to the opium habit, which was particularly displeasing to Mariana and concerning which she had frequently remonstrated with him in vain. With increasing anxiety he waited for her until near midnight, when he arose, hid his kris in his garments and passed the guards under a pretext.

The Amboinese had gotten but a short distance from the barracks, when he heard a melodious voice, which he immediately

recognized as that of his wife, whispering dulcet words of love to some one. Stealthily approaching in the direction of the sounds, he paused at the foot of the broad waringi tree, on the other side of which the corporal and Mariana were cooing in the melodious Malay idiom. His blood began to curdle in his veins when he recognized in Mariana's paramour the corporal who had aroused the green-eyed monster within him by the attentions he paid her in the Malay kampong at noon. While disengaging his kris, Juro di Kromo made a slight noise which put the watchful Feldhuis on his guard



and caused him to start up and scan the darkness about him. He had barely risen to his feet, when the irate Amboinese, mad with jealousy and the effects of opium, dashed around the tree and confronted the guilty couple with his sharp kris brandished in his right hand. The corporal, knowing the hesitancy of the native soldiers to lay hands upon a European, covered his face with his handkerchief and started to fly, in order to conceal his identity, when the injured husband, whose fury was increased by every fraction of a second, intercepted his path and laid him low with one blow of his kris. Mariana, who was stricken with terror at the sudden appearance of her lawful lord, attempted to seize him by the arm when he was about to deliver the fatal stroke and shrieked "Have mercy! hold on!" but Juro di Kromo tossed her aside as though she was a mere reed, for patience and all other virtues inculcated into him by his Christian preceptors deserted him under the joint effects of the narcotic and of the knowledge of the indisputable infidelity of his spouse. When Mariana saw her lover laid low by her husband, she ran towards the barracks with incredible speed, as though infernal hosts were pursuing her, and all the while shrieking faintly—for her rapid strides engaged all her lung power—"amuck! amuck!" to warn the unsuspecting garrison that some one had committed murder and would not stop steeping his hands in blood until he was seized or killed.

Brullier and Schmidt, who were pacing to and fro along the barracks of the whites, which were next to those of the Amboinese, heard the ominous cries and beheld a woman running towards them with streaming hair and Juro di Kromo wildly brandishing his kris above his head and rushing past the paralyzed guards into the Amboinese quarters. The amuck-runner hastily snatched a gun and a pouch full of cartridges from the rack as soon as he was inside the Amboinese barracks and took position in a corner of the dormitory. Mariana's cries of "amuck! amuck!" and the gongs of the sentinels immediately apprized Sergeant Slonderwacht, who commanded the guard for the night, of the fact that something was wrong. With a dozen men he approached the scene of the disturbance and ordered two of them to proceed against the amuck-maker with fixed bayonets. The men had scarcely crossed the threshold of the barracks when Juro di Kromo fired at them in rapid succession, killing them on the spot. He knew that, after killing Feldhuis, death awaited him in any event, and therefore he resolved to sell his life as dearly as possible and to keep up a carnival of slaughter as long as his ammunition would hold out. His frenzy had but one purpose in view—to kill.

Two hundred Amboinese, who with their wives were peacefully reposing in their couches before the loud cries of "amuck!" and the reports of the maniac's gun interrupted their slumbers, did not stir, but lay stone-still, with their blankets wrapped closely

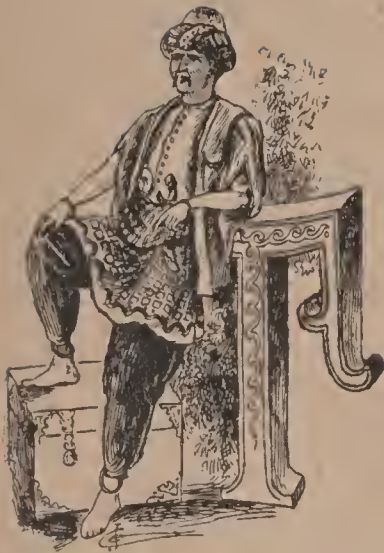
about them, for fear that if they popped up their heads to satisfy their curiosity, a stray bullet might end their precious lives. Sergeant Slonderwacht was woefully perplexed regarding what to do to render harmless the madman who kept on firing his gun wildly in all directions, when Brullier, a man of gigantic stature and iron nerve, who took in the situation at a glance, crept unobserved through one of the doors and under the iron bedsteads of the shivering Amboinese to the corner where Juro di Kromo was dealing out death, seized a favorable moment when the latter found some difficulty in expelling an empty cartridge from his gun and threw himself upon him with irresistible might. To dash the gun out of his hands, seize him by the throat and plant his feet upon his breast was the work of a second. Juro di Kromo was put in irons after having killed his rival, seven Germans and Dutchmen, six women and children and two chain-boys. Mariana was so affected by the terrible scene, of which her doings were the proximate cause, that her mind became disordered and she wandered about uttering by turns the wildest curses and the most melancholy lamentations, until the authorities took charge of her and sent her to the asylum for the insane at Samarang on Java.

In the morning Juro di Kromo was taken before the officers who employed all means at their command to get him to talk and explain the motives of his dreadful deed, but the culprit remained as silent as the grave, stolidly refusing to say a single word or even utter a sound. His countenance appeared as though his soul had been rent asunder by violent passions and his mental faculties dulled by their convulsions. Fierce hatred was the only emotion discernible in his eye. His trial dragged on wearily for over a year, because the authorities lived in hopes that the principal witness, his wife, would recover her reason. This not coming to pass, however, short work was made at last, and Juro di Kromo was sentenced to expiate his crimes on the gallows. While in prison, he was, of course, deprived of his opium pipe, and occasionally betrayed signs of deep remorse.



CHAPTER VI.

FORT DE KOCK.



HE next morning the convoy started on its way to Fort de Kock, or Bukit-Tingi, as it is called by the Malays, the residence of the Rajah of the district of Menang-Kebau, who has long since been relieved by the Dutch of the practical cares of governing. The rajah receives a liberal annual stipend from the colonial government, enabling him to live in style in his bamboo residence in the vicinity of Fort de Kock.

On leaving Padang-Pandjang, the road rises gradually and leads through a series of broad valleys studded with native villages half hidden by clusters of fruit trees and with attractive villas inhabited by planters or retired Dutch officials who have justly selected this region as the finest retreat to be found anywhere in the world, for the climate is cool, agreeable and invigorating, the vegetation luxuriant, the scenery romantic and the general aspects of the country civilized and pleasing.

Fort de Kock occupies one of the most elevated of the countless little plateaux formed by the disrupted Gleh-Rajah and permits a splendid view of the surrounding territory. To the north, the lofty peaks of Jongolo and Merapi tower towards the dark blue heavens in clear weather or are shielded from mortal gaze by a cloud-veil when moisture gathers in the atmosphere. During the day a film of light blue smoke is continually issuing from the crater of Merapi, a still active volcano. At night, streaks of flame occasionally shoot up from the bowels of Merapi, a warning to the animated nature about him that he is not yet dead, which is confirmed by the frequency of earthquake shocks. To the south, the Gleh-Rajah continue their course to the Strait of Sunda. To the east, they slope gradually towards the impenetrable morasses bordering on the Straits of Malacca. To the west, a glimpse of Padang-Lant and the sea may be obtained through a good field glass.

Fort de Kock is the most noted health station of Sumatra. It has a constant floating population of about one thousand sick and convalescing soldiers, besides many planters and others who flock thither from all parts of the island to recover from the berri-berri, malaria and all kinds of fevers, to which foreigners as well as natives are subject. The nights are very cool, necessitating woollen blankets for comfort.



The old stone fort built by the Dutch in the center of the town a century ago has been in ruins for a long time past, having been wrecked by an earthquake. The battalion stationed at the place is constantly recruited from the convalescents dismissed from the hospital. The town boasts of the largest bazaar in Menang-Kebau, to which thousands of Malays flock three times a week from all parts of the district to sell their products and purchase luxuries with the proceeds. At one end of the town is a very large fish pond surrounded by a well-kept park and the dwellings of the hadjis. The pond is formed by the widening of a mountain rivulet and is thickly studded with carp. Some thirty or forty years ago, an Austrian officer in the employ of the Dutch government and with an eye to business, suggested to the hadjis in charge of the pond that it would be a good scheme on their part, in order to increase their prestige with their followers, to stud the pond with big fish and make the natives believe that Allah had responded to the hadjis' special prayer for them. The Mohammedan priests never permit an opportunity to turn an honest penny to escape them, and the Austrian, in consideration of valuable presents given him, secured a supply of carps' eggs from his native country and planted them in the waters of the pond. The eggs were soon hatched and the carp grew to their natural proportions and were liberally fed with bananas purchased by the pious visitors at stands specially erected along the banks for that purpose. The carp, being inviolate, are very tame and will swim to the shore and eat fruit out of the hands of persons holding it close to the water's level.

Near the pond are a few missigits, or mosques, which are well patronized by the devout Moslem. A long time ago, a Malay legend says, the people of Sumatra were Buddhists. A youth of Menang-Kebau, actuated by a desire to see the world, made a trip to Mecca, where he was converted to the creed of the prophet. Upon his return, he wore the green turban and assumed the title of hadji. One of the first things he did was to command his mother to quit chewing betel. Upon her refusal to do so, he flew into a fanatic rage and stabbed her. The Malays, instead of punishing his crime, revered him as a saint who had given evidence of his sincerity by assassinating his mother for the sake of his religion, and became converts to Islamism.

The fanaticism of the natives is in strange contrast to the indifference of the European soldiers and civilians in the Dutch East Indies, who never exhibit even the slightest token of religious fervor. In all the posts a small space is set aside as a chapel, but attendance at divine service is not compulsory. It rarely happens that any of the soldiers except the Christian Amboinese and the negroes take any part in religious ceremonies. One day the arrival of several missionaries, who were to preach in a big hall in the evening, was announced to the soldiers at Fort de Kock and a

general leave of absence granted on that account, but not one out of seven hundred white soldiers attended the services. The men preferred to drink gin in the canteen or to saunter with their wives through the beautiful parks, where a military band plays every night when the weather is fair.

A short distance from the hospital is a peculiar institution, a kind of soldiers' home, called by the natives Kampong Blanda—White Village—which covers about forty acres of ground and is intersected by straight streets lined with pretty bamboo houses built in European styles and peopled by retired veterans of the Colonial army, who dread a return to their native lands on account of the hardships a change of climate would impose upon their worn out frames, and who prefer to spend the evening of their days in the earthly paradise of Fort de Kock in the company of each other and of their patient and submissive Javanese housekeepers. The tropical regions, being, contrary to natural expectation, devoid of gorgeous flowers, the veterans of Kampong Blanda employ a portion of their spare funds in importing from Europe choice varieties of roses, lilies, lilacs and other beautiful flowers and shrubs and planting them at the foot of cocoanut palms and waringis in the small gardens encircling their cottages. The absence of song-birds in the tropics is supplied by canary birds brought over in cages from Hong Kong by Chinese traders.

While the convoy was approaching the idyllic retreat of the veterans in this paradisiacal region and enjoying the prospect of a long day's rest before being sent on to the frontier, Colonel van der Pool, commanding at Fort de Kock, was exercising convalescing soldiers on intersecting roads. When this officer beheld the new troops coming, he set out to meet them at the head of his column and the band. After exchanging the brief military salutations, all proceeded in military order to the barracks, where the troops were given a day's rest before receiving their equipment and being sent to the frontier at Mandaheling.

It was a gala night in the canteen of Fort de Kock. The new comers, exhausted by a tedious journey from the coast across the mountain passes to the Highland Eden, mingled freely with their comrades in arms on the convalescent list, and many old friendships, cemented by mutual dangers in skirmishes with Achinese pirates and Battah cannibals, were renewed and baptized afresh with streams of gin and wine. Brullier, who had previously seen six years' service in Sumatra, was in a particularly jolly mood, the beautiful environments having to some degree assuaged his grief for the loss of the peerless Si-Wardi. Being plentifully supplied with funds, which Kromo Wonzos ill luck at dice had helped to swell, he invited a score of his European chums to go with him to the canteen and celebrate their happy arrival.

The canteen is a very long and broad hall. It has a cement

floor and a bamboo roof covered with atap. At one end there is a bar and at the other a stage. Javanese waiters were kept busy hurrying to and fro and supplying the thirsty warriors with liquid refreshments of all grades and kinds. The sides of the canteen were adorned with portraits of members of the reigning house of Holland and with battle-pictures of many wars. Brullier, Esshuis, Saufhaus and Schmidt were seated at a small table in the center of the hall and enjoying the wine and a lively conversation.

"I am sorry for our poor corporal," said Saufhaus, a Swiss, who had a tinge of sentimentality in his nature; "he was a good fellow who would have made his mark some day, if he only had been able to suppress the Don Juan within him."

Esshuis, who was a fish-blooded, plethoric and cautious Dutchman, grunted assent to the remark of his comrade and said:

"I often warned him to beware of the treacherous Amboinese, who carefully hide all their emotions and store them up and intensify them for one terrific outbreak, but he laughed at me, trusting in his luck, which, he claimed, never deserted him. I knew that something terrible would happen to him some day."

"No one can escape his fate," gravely remarked Schmidt, who had become a fatalist ever since he left his home on the Baltic and who had roamed over many lands and seas as a soldier and sailor.

"Well, boys," Brullier fell in; "we are getting altogether too sentimental. Feldhuis perished while attempting to anticipate the paradise of the Amboinese Othello. He is at rest, but we have no paradise before us after we get to the scene of action. I can assure you of that, for I have been there. The savages in the northern part of the island take a peculiar delight in torturing you to death or eating you for supper, and they are as impervious to the pleadings of eloquence as a bamboo rod to water. A few months ago, Tuanku Iman Muda, the rajah of Tenom, on the northwestern coast of Acheen, captured a vessel sailing under the British flag, which had the misfortune to get stranded among the cliffs, and the Dutch had a lively time of it while seeking to ransom the captured crew and to avoid difficulties with John Bull, who, you all know, is an exceedingly stubborn fellow. By the way, I will give you a song I have improvised for that occasion."

In the meantime the canteen had become a pandemonium of many voices speaking, shouting, singing and yelling in a dozen languages. While Brullier was clearing his throat, his comrades beckoned to their nearest neighbors for the restoration of comparative quiet. When this was partially attained, Brullier sang the following German verses, which those about him accompanied with the clinking of their half empty glasses:

"Wenn ein englisch Schiff sich
In dem Kurs geirrt ganz schrecklich,

Bei Tenom ging auf den Strand
Und dem Feinde in die Hand;
Dieses ist nicht zu ertragen.
Was wird John Bull wohl dazu sagen?
Drum fuer England schnell in's Feld,
Aber das kost' Geld."

After the peals of laughter and applause, which greeted Brullier's sonorous strains, had subsided, he was asked to relate the story of the wreck of the *Nisero* and the rescue of her crew. The tall Austrian rapidly gulped down a few glasses of wine, in order to prevent his perpetual thirst from interfering with his narration, and then began:

"Last December the British steamer *Nisero* cleared the port of Batavia with an alleged load of ballast for England. Instead of passing through the Straits of Malacca, where Dutch and British men-of-war are constantly keeping a sharp lookout on the piratical Achinese, the *Nisero* steamed through the Strait of Sunda and along the western coast of Sumatra. The captain carried on board a large amount of contraband, consisting of rifles and ammunition, which he intended to sell to Tuanku Iman Muda, the rajah of Tenom. Not being supplied with reliable charts of that dangerous shore, his vessel was wrecked among the many cliffs near Tenom and soon discovered by the rajah's men, who lost no time in securing the cargo and leading away the crew into captivity. Dutch cruisers soon afterwards discovered the wreck of the *Nisero* and forwarded the news to Batavia. The Dutch governor-general informed the British governor at Malacca of the facts and the latter immediately demanded that the Dutch liberate the crew of the *Nisero* from the clutches of the Achinese within a month. Otherwise, it was hinted, British forces would march into Acheen and either release or avenge their countrymen. The Dutch understood the meaning of the message which meant that England would occupy a portion of Sumatra if they did not live up to the articles of the treaty of St. James, which was concluded in 1872 and which bound the Dutch to keep the pirates in check.

"Accordingly, the Dutch fitted out an expedition consisting of four battalions of infantry, artillery and sappers against the Rajah of Tenom and bombarded some of his seaboard kampongs, capturing large quantities of black pepper, rice, silk and other articles. In the meantime Tuanku Iman Muda had retired with his men into inaccessible mountain retreats, toward which the Dutch marched under the conduct of high-priced Achinese guides until they came across an empty hut, to which the *Nisero*'s captain had pinned a letter, begging in piteous terms that immediate measures be taken to ransom him and his crew, their only means of salvation, as the rajah was about to bring them to a hidden place in the mountains

where they could never be found and rescued by force. The Dutch saw that a further advance would jeopardize their cause, withdrew their battalions and resorted to diplomacy. Tuanku Beit, a rajah kept in confinement on the small island of Banka near the coast of Java was liberated on condition that he act as mediator between the ruler of Tenom and the Dutch. Iman Muda demanded a ransom of \$100,000 for the ship's crew besides a large indemnity for his destroyed chattels and kampongs. The government was compelled to grant the demands of the Malay corsair. According to the terms agreed upon, the money and the prisoners were to be exchanged in the vicinity of Bukit-Sabon, a small fort some distance from Tenom.

"But the troubles of the Dutch did not end with their accedence to the pirate's demands. When the chain-boys approached the place of ransom with large chests containing the required amount in Dutch paper money, the rajah refused to be paid in that kind of currency and demanded hard money. The Dutch officers were tantalized when the chain-boys returned without the prisoners and with the bank notes untouched, as they had watched the proceedings through their field glasses and already given orders to load the field pieces and give the pirates a hot farewell greeting after the British crew should have been conveyed out of the reach of danger. There was nothing left to be done, however, but to fulfill the wishes of the wily and fastidious rajah. The necessary coin was finally secured and a long line of chain-boys, carrying on bamboo poles large iron chests filled with gold and silver, dispatched to the appointed spot.

"The rajah did not take the time to count his ill-gotten treasure, but had his followers take it to a mountain fastness, after setting free the score of British sailors, who had to be carried to the Dutch camp on stretchers, as the hardships they had endured during their captivity among a cruel people had reduced them almost to skeletons. As soon as they were safe within the Dutch lines, fire was opened upon the retreating figures of the pirates of Tenom, without, however, doing them any serious injury.

"A few days later, word was brought to the camp that Tuanku Beit, whom the Dutch had released from the captivity in which he had been languishing for piracy since 1873, had attacked Tuanku Iman Muda with a handful of men on the night of the ransom and captured every dollar of the money paid over by the Dutch. Tuanku Beit then returned to his native kampongs in Acheen with his stolen treasure and again took up arms against the Dutch. The rescued sailors were taken to a hospital and returned to England as soon as their health permitted."

"Iman Muda must be a ferocious fellow," Saufhaus remarked, after Brullier had finished his story and drank a few glasses in rapid succession to recuperate from the exertion.

“By no means,” Brullier answered, piquing himself on his superior knowledge of men and things; “the Rajah of Tenom has received a very good education at the court of Stamboul and possesses all the airs of an accomplished gentleman. In fact, he is the

‘mildest mannered man
That ever scuttled ship or cut a throat.’”



CHAPTER VII.

THE TITIPAPAN ESTATE.



AFTER a full day's rest, a detail of five infantry companies, recruited from among the convalescents discharged from the hospital and the newly arrived reinforcements from Java, in full field equipment, left the barracks early in the morning and began their circuitous march to Mandaheling, the main center of the expeditions conducted against the pirates of Acheen and the cannibals infesting the romantic shores of Lake Tobah in Upper Sumatra. The detail was commanded by Captain van Houten and Lieutenant Schwarzenberg, but its general movements were subject to orders from a fiscal controller who was bound on a trip of inspection for some of the plantations lying along the line of march. On the preceding day, Brullier, who had been made a sergeant for his valiant conduct in overpowering Juro di Kromo, who had done such havoc while running amuck at Padang-Pandjang, had presented his superior officers with an invitation from his brother, Robert von Horn, the proprietor of one of the largest plantations of Menang-Kebau, requesting the pleasure of entertaining the entire detail on the Titipapan estate. The invitation was referred by the officers to the controller, Mynheer van Swieten, who accepted it for the detail and made the fact known by a messenger to the planter.

The detail, which presented the same medley of complexions and nationalities as the convoy, like the latter acted as escort for a long line of ox-carts containing supplies. The men marched in closed ranks, but at their ease, and the women formed the rear. Three light vehicles accompanied the detail. One of them contained the Njonja Augusta and her mother Si-Idup; another, Si-Lida, Captain van Houten's housekeeper; and the third, Si-Rambut, a Javanese woman of some linguistic accomplishments, who frequently acted as the controller's interpreter. The controller himself rode in state in a carriage drawn by four horses. Next to his driver sat a native servant holding with both hands a large gilded umbrella, the emblem of his dignity in the eyes of the natives.

Fort de Kock being situated near the watershed of the Gleh-Rajah, the detail traveled down hill most of the time, past giddy, forest-clad ravines, many hundreds of feet in depth, across wooden bridges spanning the irrigating channels conducting mountain brooks through rice-fields, which are laid out in terraces along the slopes, and past Malay kampongs, coffee-gardens, fruit orchards and

tobacco fields. Groups of palmettos, cocoanut palms and bamboo rose like islands out of the open spaces. The road was stony and dusty, but shaded by tall bamboos planted at close range along the sides of the road, and described a large number of small curves before reaching the hill-enclosed plain occupied by the Titipapan estate. The declination of the road was occasionally so steep that the highway appeared to be swallowed up by the dense masses of overhanging foliage.

Mynheer von Horn, whose wink was obeyed implicitly by at least five hundred Javanese, Malay, Chinese and Singhalese coolies, and by nearly as many females, mostly Javanese and Battah, with a few Chinese and Japanese women, had caused all preparations for a suitable reception of the detail, which embraced a population nearly equal to that of his plantation, to be made without much regard to expense, in view of the fact that his brother, whom he had not seen for many years and whom he hoped to attach to himself by offering to secure his release from the service, would be among the passing sojourners at his princely estate.

When the master of Titipapan and several tobacco planters from Deli, who were recuperating at the neighboring health resort of Paya-Kombo from the debilitating effects of the climate of the lowlands and who were his guests whenever they felt inclined to enjoy hunting wild beasts or game in the mountains, espied the detail drawing near the confines of the estate, they mounted their horses and rode forward to welcome the military at the foot of the hills. The planters were dressed in white linen camping suits and wore canvas shoes and canvas-covered cork helmets of the same color. The cavalcade had soon crossed the wide expanse of level land between the mansion and the nearest hills, along the ledges of which the transport was approaching, and found itself in front of the magnificent carriage of the controller. The planters stopped their horses, and the controller ordered his driver to halt, stepped out and approached Mynheer von Horn with his hat under his left arm. The planters greeted the government's fiscal representative in a rather condescending manner, without dismounting. The controller then resumed his seat in his carriage which moved on so as not to block the way for the detail which by this time had come up to the planters. Captain van Houten commanded "Halt!" saluted by touching his cap with his right hand, and, in compliance with Mynheer von Horn's request, ordered his lieutenant to give Sergeant Brullier permission to leave the ranks.

When the sergeant walked up to his brother, the latter dismounted and embraced him affectionately. They had not seen each other for fifteen years. When the elder von Horn left the gay capital on the Danube, to seek his fortune in Sumatra, the younger was still attending the military college. Both had since that time gone through a great variety of experiences, though of an opposite

character, the elder having become accustomed to command, while the younger had become more or less of an adventurer. Seizing his horse by the bridle, von Horn walked at his brother's side to the residence and conversed with him on private matters.

The planter's home was a rather stately edifice, built in the Indo-European style, three feet from the ground, and resting on stone columns. The entrance to the garden surrounding it on all sides was arched over by immense trees, covered with bright red lianas as with a network of fiery garlands. Wide covered verandas surrounded the house on all sides. The principal decorations of the interior were hunting trophies, consisting of the stuffed skin of a huge boa constrictor, to which a wooden bell was tied, telling the sad story of a full-grown goat which was swallowed whole by the reptile; of elephants' skulls, tiger skins, rhinoceros' feet made up into cigar stands, wild bulls' horns, boar tusks and deer's horns, all recalling the time when Titipapan, which means Wooden Bridge, was part of the primeval forest.

The estate covered an area of nearly 6,000 acres. The large water-wheel, which drove all the machinery on the estate, was moved by a selokkan, or water-course, led between high dykes from the slopes of the forest-clad mountains. The natives have thoroughly mastered the difficulties of machinery, pulleys, belts and saws, and made all the packing cases on the premises from trees felled in the neighborhood.

Back of the planter's mansion stretched several long rows of bamboo houses, each surrounded by a small garden, the homes of the coolies employed on the plantation. Further away were several large tobacco sheds, each about five hundred feet in length and from one to two hundred feet in width, which had been fitted up for the reception of the soldiers and their wives.

The chief products of the plantation were cinnamon, tea, coffee, tobacco and rice. A coffee-garden is a peculiarly fine sight in harvest time, the crop being gathered exclusively by young Javanese girls. Herds of cattle were seen grazing on the hill-sides. The entire estate, being laid out on a grand scale, made a majestic impression, heightened by the magnificent panorama of tall mountains, clad in evergreen foliage, rearing their crests about it in all directions.

When the shades of night from the verdant mountains began to lengthen across the plain and the deep blue sky assumed darker tinges, the soldiers and their wives squatted down to a sumptuous feast spread out on improvised tables in one of the big tobacco sheds and enjoyed it as a pleasing interruption of their monotonous military diet. The officers, who were quartered in the commodious manor, filed into the large dining-room at sunset. A huge fan in the shape of a mat was suspended from the ceiling and kept in continual motion by means of a cord attached to the middle of it

and pulled by a Javanese lad on the outside of the house, thus producing currents of fresh air. The controller occupied the seat of honor next to the host, and the others were grouped according to their rank. The dinner consisted of four courses, comprising turtle soup, brook trout, roast beef and antelope steak, and including rice in many forms of preparation, fruits, vegetables, sauces and ices. When the cigars were passed around and the champagne glasses filled, Mynheer von Horn arose and brought out a toast on the health of the King of Holland and the prosperity of the Colonial government, under whose wise and just rule the planters found themselves in a prosperous condition and were proud to welcome the representatives of the government to their holdings. The planter's brief and emphatic remarks were roundly applauded by his guests. Controller van Swieten considered it his duty to respond and said that the patriotism of Mynheer von Horn and his generous hospitality towards the men who were to risk their lives in opening up new fields for commerce, agriculture and industry in pirate and cannibal haunts, were duly appreciated. The captain and the lieutenant thanked their host on behalf of themselves and of their men for the kind provisions made for their entertainment, and assured him that he would ever be held in grateful remembrance by his guests. After some complimentary allusion by the officers to Brullier's bravery in securing the amuck-maker at Padang-Pandjang, the party arose from their seats and made themselves comfortable on the broad verandas lining the luxuriant garden which displayed a gaudy variety of tropical and sub-tropical flowers and shrubs.

Towards eight o'clock all the soldiers and coolies and their wives and children gathered in the biggest of the tobacco sheds, where a small wooden stage had been improvised at one end, to witness a Javanese play performed by some of the more intelligent of the native soldiers and by a quartette of pretty and graceful dancers selected from among the maidens attending to the coffee-gardens. The planter and his guests and the members of his household occupied the seats of honor close to the stage. The gamelan, or orchestra, included about twenty Javanese who performed on a variety of instruments. Kromo Wonzo, whose gambling proclivities had by no means dulled his love for the most queenly of arts, acted as bandmaster and played a rebab, or two-stringed violin. Other instruments were the sooling, a kind of bamboo whistle, the gambang, a kind of xylophone, brass and silver sarons similar to the gambang, kettle-shaped bonangs, big gongs, some small and one large drum.

The plot of the play performed, Damar Woolan, was a rather tangled-up affair and treated of a king wishing to give his daughter in marriage to a certain prince on condition that he accomplish several extraordinary feats. The prince failed to procure the tro-

phies demanded by the king and is displaced by a prince of a hostile dynasty. In the meantime the princess was stolen by a giant who is attacked and killed by the successful prince. The first prince is furious and provokes his successful rival, but the latter comes out victorious. The marriage of the victor and the king's daughter concluded the play.

The planter and his chosen guests, who attended the performance for the sake of policy only and not on account of any predilection for what European taste would consider unmelodious music and primeval theatricals, retired early in the evening through a side entrance into the open and strolled into the parlor of von Horn's residence, where Brullier and others catered to their more refined perceptions by rendering on the piano selections from Suppe and Strauss. Some Japanese girls, who were employed as domestics about the house, and the *njonjas* of the officers, joined the men in some very lively quadrilles. The mansion had been profusely decorated with Chinese and Japanese colored lanterns of fantastic shapes, and appeared from the distance like an abode of hamadryads flitting about to the accompaniment of weird music and to the illumination of fire-belching dragons. Refreshments were partaken of freely and when the snowy horn of the moon rose towards midnight above the dark hills hiding from view Paya-Kombo on the east, the dances assumed the form of a wild medley, in which the intoxicating breath of the tropics imparted additional lustre to the eyes of the dancers and their frames quivered with the passions beseeeming a torrid clime.

After the guests had retired, von Horn urgently pressed his brother to accept his offer to purchase his release from the army and to associate himself with him in managing the plantation, but Brullier, who had the image of Si-Wardi before his mind and was in a restless mood of mind, declined to entertain any such propositions, and informed his brother that he preferred to seek forgetfulness in the more checkered career of a soldier. With a sigh von Horn desisted from further solicitations and retired.



CHAPTER VIII.

HISTORY OF THE SUMATRA WRAPPER.



IN the following morning Mynheer von Horn accompanied Controller van Swieten on an inspection tour about the estate for the purpose of ascertaining the amount of taxes to be paid on the year's crop, while Captain van Houten and Lieutenant Schwarzenberg enjoyed a carriage drive with their ladies in the romantic vicinity. Sergeant Brullier remained at the house and entertained the two visiting planters from Deli, Messrs. Werschier and Bamberg, the former a Dutchman, the latter a German. Seated on cosy reclining chairs placed against the shady side of the building, they enjoyed the cool morning breeze while puffing away at fragrant Manila cigars, of which their host always kept a plentiful supply on hand. Brullier entertained the two visitors from the other side of Sumatra with stories of his adventures and of his changing his name. After a while the conversation drifted to the planters' favorite subject, tobacco, and Werschier, who owned one of the largest tobacco plantations of Deli, satisfied Brullier's curiosity with the following sketch of the development of that district:

"In the sixties the Dutch ascertained through experts that the land subject to the Sultan of Deli was eminently adapted for the raising of tobacco. They lost no time in concluding an advantageous bargain with his highness, whereby he agreed to permit his entire territory to be opened up for cultivation, in consideration of the price realized from the sale of lands. Many German, American, English, Austrian and other capitalists hurried to invest their money in what was considered a very paying and conservative investment, and a colony of tobacco-growers soon sprang up in Deli. The Dutch flag floated above Belawan, the port of entry, but all kinds of money were in circulation. Dutch silver coins were scarce, but there was no lack of Mexican, American and Spanish dollars, Japanese yen, Chinese taels and other coins. Plantations soon sprang up like mushrooms after the rain, in spite of the great difficulties encountered in the shape of trackless virgin forests which had to be cleared away with fire, dynamite and the ax. Twenty men holding each other by the hand would not have been able to span some of the ancient trees. The first crops proved so satisfactory, however, that there was a constant influx of investors. The only

difficulty remaining was the obtaining of competent labor. The Javanese and Malays not taking a liking to the rather severe task of clearing away forests, the Dutch government made an agreement with China, empowering the former to employ an agent to recruit laborers among the coolies of Tonquin. The latter received a bounty of eighty dollars upon their arrival at Deli and were pledged to serve for three years. The Deli Spoorweg Maatschappij was next formed with President Herkenrath at the head for the purpose of building narrow-gauge lines of railway to connect the various plantations with the harbor. In a few years about five hundred miles of road were built, connecting the terminal stations of Belawan, Medan, Timbang-Langkat, Silese, Perbauungan and Deli Tuwa.

"The planters on the start turned over their products to a commissary residing in Labuan and rapidly became wealthy. If one considers that the Deli tobacco is used merely for cigar wrappers, it is difficult to understand how such immense quantities as are raised in the district could be disposed of. And yet annually new plantations are started, without influencing the high price paid for the article, proving its choiceness, the enormous quantity consumed and the excess of the demand over the supply.

"The soil of Deli is devoted almost exclusively to the raising of tobacco. Even after forest and underbrush have been cleared away with fire and sword, the planters are compelled to keep up a continual warfare against the encroachments of nature which strives to cover every inch of ground with a robe of verdure and does so with alarming rapidity. After one or two crops have been harvested, a patch is permitted to lie idle for eight or ten years to permit the soil to recover the ingredients essential for the best grades of tobacco. The adjoining patch, where the land has been previously cleared, is then cultivated, and so on patch after patch is cleared and cultivated for a year or two at the time until, after the lapse of eight or ten years, the original tract is again tilled. During the years in which no tobacco is raised on the cleared lands, the subjects of the sultan are permitted to sow them with red rice, which does not require irrigation and the cultivation of which by the natives saves the planters the trouble of keeping their fields free from the rapid growth of new vegetation.

"In order to obtain as large and uniform leaves as possible, the plant is clipped at the top when blossoming, in order that the sap intended for the seeds may be diverted to the large leaves at the base. When ripe, the plants are cut off at the base and hung up in bunches of ten in a shed to wither. The leaves are then plucked and gathered into small bunches and these again piled up into a cube about ten feet each way and allowed to ferment and dry, that is, to go through the natural process of fermentation which gives them their fine brown color and lustre under the influence of a

considerable degree of heat. After the leaves have been thoroughly cured, they are assorted according to size and color, the latter varying from the lightest yellowish brown to the deepest black-brown. All the work is done by Chinese coolies who exhibit a wonderful degree of patience and skill. Each coolie has charge of about four thousand tobacco plants and is paid according to the quantity of the finished product turned out by him. The spots on the leaves are formed by dew drops in the same manner in which a human being gets sunburned. Leaves with small freckles bring the highest price in the market."

"What sort of fellow is your Sultan of Deli?" Brullier asked.

Bamberg, who was personally acquainted with his majesty, replied: "In the first place, Mohammed Ashari's full name is too long to burden the memory with. Although only thirty-five years of age, he looks like a man of sixty. He resides in a wooden palace on a small island called Pooloo-Brian, lying in the delta of the Deli river. The most remarkable circumstance connected with the man is his harem, which shelters some fifty of the finest sweet sixteen beauties to be found on Sumatra. The railroad company has presented him with a palace car which is frequently switched from the side-track near his island to the nearest station and attached to a train conveying him and his seraglio to one of the mountain resorts in the vicinity of Deli Tuwa or Serdang. He is excessively fond of wealth and has literally sold out his country to the planters, whereby he has served his own ends in a very shrewd manner. He stands under the protection of the Dutch government, but is at liberty to do as he pleases with his native subjects, as long as he does not violate the rights of planters and of Europeans residing in his district. He considers nearly all means of obtaining money justifiable. It is reported that some years ago he was in league with a band of counterfeiters, mostly runaway Chinese coolies, who set up in the mountains among the Kora Battahs an establishment to reproduce the coin of the realm as well as to carry on a profitable illicit traffic in opium. The casuistry of his hadji counselors rescued him from the judicial claws of the Dutch lion. Otherwise, he retains but a mere shadow of real power, and therefore has taken the precaution to hoard up a vast amount of wealth, which would enable him to cross the Straits of Malacca and live at ease at Singapore whenever he should find things becoming too hot for him in his ancestral realm."

The Chinese coolies, who perform all the work on the tobacco plantations, are in a cruel dilemma on the start, because they cannot very well understand their overseers who speak Malay. They are frequently severely flogged upon the slightest provocation, and when they attempt to escape they find themselves "between the devil and the deep sea," not only because the planters pay a reward of fifty guilders for the capture of an escaped coolie, but because

they really have no place of safety to fly to. The fugitives generally betake themselves to the mountains, where they tramp from place to place until they reach the settlements of the cannibal Battahs, who butcher and eat them. In spite of the horrible fate sure to be encountered by a fugitive in whatsoever direction he turns his trembling steps, escapes are a common occurrence, causing to nearly every plantation an annual loss of from \$2,000 to \$4,000, the amount of the bounties paid the coolies. On the plantation of Timbang-Langkat an assistant was one day buried alive, with only his head projecting above the ground, by the irate coolies whom he had punished with great cruelty for any remissness in their work, and several of whom he had shot dead when they attacked him.

The assistants on the tobacco plantations are mostly young men of good family, who have taken a fancy to a planter's life and are possessed of a love for adventure strong enough to face the murderous climate of the lowlands of Sumatra. But as not all of them, upon their arrival in Deli, are sufficiently acclimated or conversant with the Malay language, the planters employ many sinjos from Batavia, who are experts at handling the coolies. The latter are slaves in all save the name. A flourishing business is carried on by dealers in human flesh, who import young Japanese girls to act as housekeepers for the managers and their assistants on the plantations.

"What are the so-called arson-letters sent by the Battahs?" Brulier inquired; "I have heard of them, but was never able to thoroughly comprehend their significance."

"We are in receipt of such letters occasionally," Werschier replied, "and the cause of their being sent is generally about as follows. The Battahs are skillful carpenters and are frequently employed on the plantations to put up bamboo houses and sheds, which they accomplish without using a single nail or other piece of metal in fastening the joints and beams. On account of the difficulty encountered by employer and employe in understanding each other's dialect, the Battah craftsmen frequently feel themselves aggrieved, dispatch so-called arson-letters, and, if no attention is paid the latter, the sheds and supplies of the addressee are liable to be set ablaze at night. Foreigners generally mistake for an act of hatred and revenge what the Battahs consider as a mere act of justice.

"An arson-letter is written in the Battah language upon a small bamboo leaf which is fastened to the house of the one who, in their eyes, has been guilty of a transgression of the universal principles of right, or is supposed to be responsible for the damage done. The complaint is stated and satisfaction demanded, the latter consisting either in bringing a murdered relative back to life or in the payment of damages. In the former case, it is the payment of

blood money, and in the latter, restitution in natura or in its equivalent, that is asked.

“Three threatening letters are sent altogether. The first and second for the opening of negotiations to settle the difficulty, which is indicated by a bit of gambir, a composition pressed into little cakes and used for the coloring of tobacco, being attached to the letters. The planters generally do not know this, and therefore allow the favorable opportunity, in which the entire difficulty could be settled by the payment of a trifling sum, to pass by. As there are no courts of justice in Deli, before which the Battahs could bring their grievances, this is the only way in which they can obtain redress. These letters, consequently, are an excusable method of self-help on part of the natives. The third and final epistle contains the threat proper and is attached to a small assortment of miniature bamboo weapons, indicative of the outbreak of hostilities on part of the petitioner. The following is a fair sample of the wording of an arson-letter:

“ ‘This letter do I hang up, says Si-Kalong. Rice-price not given me. The Tandil Assam Si-Straaten asked to do so by us. He has called our mother bad names, and still our price, a chicken, is not paid. If rice-price, which we, the insulted, demand, is not paid by the Tandil Assam, who, while they are passing, also touched and deceived Battah girls, and if he is not discharged, I burn down houses and murder men. My home floats in the mountains. My name is Flying-Fox. My father is the Tiger in the rembu. He, whose heart is aggrieved.’

“In the highlands the arson-letters are also frequently employed when the chief of the tribe to which the writer belongs, refuses to hear the complaint, or when, according to the notion of the writer, the chief has decided the case in bad faith against him. The letter is then hung up at the house of the accused, but from that moment the writer becomes outlawed and is compelled to seek safety from another chief.”



CHAPTER IX.

THROUGH REMBU AND ALANG-ALANG.



AFTER an enjoyable sojourn for two nights and a day on the Titipapan estate, the detail resumed its march to Mandaheling with the knowledge that many hardships and few delights were before them. The road, which could be called such only by a euphuism, led through the rembu, as the pathless wilderness of forest in Sumatra is called, alternating with areas covered by alang-alang, a kind of grass growing to a man's height, which, in spite of its fresh, light green color, burns like paper when the torch is applied to it, along the eastern slopes of the broad and disrupted mountain chain extending through the entire length of the island. From Paya-Kombo, a health resort a short distance beyond the Titipapan estate, to Manhadeling, the general line of march was in a northerly direction, with mountains to the left and swamps to the right. Like an oasis in a desert, an occasional Malay kampong rose above a clearing on hilly ground. At intervals of from twenty to thirty miles, there were kadoos or rest-stations, built by the government for the convenience of the troops while marching from place to place, but mostly too small to accommodate more than one company of soldiers and their retinue. The kadoo was in charge of a mandoor who saw to it that fresh water was on hand and that the building was kept intact. The stations between Paya-Kombo and the outskirts of the Battah lands were rather primitive affairs, being little better than tumble-down log cabins, the roofs of which had to be repaired after every shower. For a short distance beyond Paya-Kombo the road was fairly good, but even before the first kadoo was reached, the soldiers got a foretaste of what they had to expect further on. The road gradually receded from its mountain course and crept along the foot-hills and along occasional precipices bordering on the impenetrable morasses covered with a dense growth of trees and underbrush.

The men as well as women stood in need of the extra strength gathered during their brief stay at the hospitable plantation, for the path frequently disappeared in mudholes, in which the ox-carts got stuck or toppled over and had to be rescued by the united exertions of all the men, even the captain and lieutenant putting their shoulders to the wheel. The van of the detail made use of

their cape knives to cut away overhanging branches which endangered the safety of the shade-roofs of the grobacs. The crossing of bridges spanning mountain brooks tearing along at the bottom of deep gulches was particularly dangerous, because the timbers rot very rapidly and none can foretell how soon the hollow trunk of a tree may give way and precipitate team and driver into the yawning chasm, from which there is no hope of rescue for the man, even if he should land alive, which is utterly improbable.

While trudging along under a sultry, cloudless sky, the men were plagued by the endless difficulties arising from a scarcely discernible road leading alternately over steep hills, through forests where the rapid growth of vegetation had produced new obstacles, and over swampy patches constantly inundated by the rain water flowing from the mountains.

When, after completing a day's journey, a kadoo was reached towards night, the caravansary generally proved insufficient to accommodate the whole detail and was therefore surrendered to the women and children. The soldiers in such events contented themselves with sleeping under improvised atap sheds, open on all sides and covered with a thatched roof of palm-leaves, which were constructed by the Javanese soldiers in an incredibly short space of time. Neither nails nor hammers are employed in the construction of these sheds, which consist of only four bamboo poles supporting a slanting roof. All joining and fastening is done by means of rattan strings. A bright campfire is then built near the sheds to keep away tigers and other wild beasts with which those regions abound. The officers shared the quarters of their men, while the njonjas stopped at the residence of the nearest controller in the district.

For ten weary, hot days the detail wound its way between mountain and swamp. The isolated Malay kampongs were hailed with joy, although they offered no advantages except the liberty to purchase refreshments at extortionate prices. The swamps emitted fever-creating miasma which made their presence known by an evil odor, causing nausea and by the nightly chorus of vast armies of bull-frogs, called kodak-sapi by the Malays, mingled with the occasional roar of a tiger, the buzzing of countless swarms of insects and the parrot-like utterances of the lizards in the hollow bamboo posts.

A primeval tropical forest presents a view of nature in her original wildness and luxuriance. Climbing plants and lianas spread from branch to branch displaying a great variety of blossoms, forms and colors. Offshoots of the big trees, with roots suspended in the air, seek the moist and soft soil to lay the foundation of a new tree. The decaying trunks of fallen forest giants are overgrown with dense clusters of shade-plants developing luxuriantly in the rank atmosphere. The rembu is the home of about fifty varieties

of snakes, of which about one-third is poisonous, but very timid, never attacking man unless provoked. The bird world is represented by a few varieties of doves, swallows, quail, cuckoos, snipes, woodpeckers, parrots and rhinoceros-birds. Bugs and butterflies are found in abundance.

The larger of the wild beasts infesting Sumatra are the elephant, the tiger and the rhinoceros. The dense vegetation shields from the hunter's aim the tiger, who, when hungry or dissatisfied with the prey offered by the rembu, sometimes approaches the confines of a plantation or village, and carries off coolies who are unarmed and not on their guard. The elephants wander in herds throughout the whole length of the island, but prefer the wide plains of the southern provinces.

In one of the larger kampongs passed through by the detail a passar, or market, was held, where the products of the country were exchanged for foreign articles. Thus, rice, maize, leguminous fruits, jams, brown palm-sugar, palm-wine, tobacco, betel, blue cloth, wooden combs, bamboo or bone cases for sirih, were traded off for salt, English linen, Swedish matches, American kerosene, tin cans, and head-wraps of Swiss manufacture. Women and girls formed a majority of the buyers and sellers. The women carried their naked babies in slendangs, or large shawls, which were wrapped about their bodies and shoulders. The girls were very clean and neat, and the slight flush of red peering through their brown complexions frequently gave them a very pretty appearance.

The Malays of Sumatra are, with the exception of some tribes, such as the Battahs and Achinese, indolent, shiftless and peaceful, fond of cock-fights and gambling, and compel the women to do all the work in the household and in the fields. They are fanatical Mohammedans and buy as many wives as their purse will permit. They are rarely employed except for lighter kinds of labor, such as teaming, butchering and herding cattle. The work on the plantations is done mainly by Chinese and Javanese coolies.

The road on which the detail traveled was originally a Malay trail, on which in 1825, shortly after England had ceded to Holland Sumatra, Java and the Molucca Islands in exchange for Ceylon and the South African colonies, the Tuankus of Menang-Kebau and of Rau led their fanatical hordes of Padries, a Mohammedan sect powerful in the highlands of Padang, against the Battahs, whom they sought to convert with fire and sword from heathenism and cannibalism to the faith of the prophet. After destroying hundreds of kampongs and slaughtering thousands of the inhabitants, they succeeded in subjugating what are now known as the half-civilized Battahs inhabiting the country south of Lake Tobah. When the Malay forces of the two tuankus approached Lake Tobah, however, they were met with such stubborn resistance that they were compelled to retreat with considerable loss.

The Dutch, dreading the ascendancy of a fanatical sect, took away all power from the native rulers. Colonel Michiels, who was made governor of the west coast of Sumatra in 1837, desired to conquer the lands of the cannibal Battahs about Lake Tobah, but was unable to begin operations for lack of men and means. In 1873, the outrages perpetrated by the pirates of the straits upon vessels sailing under the British and other flags compelled the Dutch to make a determined effort to reduce the Achinese to subjection. Until the present day a ceaseless guerilla warfare has been in progress between the Achinese and the Dutch in the northern part of Sumatra without many positive results being achieved. Whenever and wherever the Dutch appear with a superior force, the Achinese will retreat, avoiding pitched battles and relying for safety on their intimate knowledge of the country. The Dutch have destroyed any number of Achinese villages, but have failed to compel obedience from any of the natives except isolated individuals near the coast towns. It is impossible to locate with any degree of exactness the boundaries of the Achinese territory, as the natives roam about like robbers in small bands under the leadership of their chiefs and when close pressed, betake themselves with their families and cattle into inaccessible mountain retreats, where they will subsist for an indefinite length of time on rice and salt. The natives are by no means at harmony with each other. When they are not on the warpath against the Dutch, they are frequently fighting among themselves. Thus, when one gang has returned loaded with plunder from a successful attack upon a ship, another gang will seek to rob the first. Although the Achinese population is less than half a million and their country has been dotted with a network of military posts by the Dutch, the latter have, during the past quarter of a century, sacrificed more than one hundred million dollars and the lives of one hundred thousand white and double that number of native soldiers in their attempt to subjugate one of the fiercest tribes in existence. The Dutch at an early date became aware of the difficulties attending their projects upon Acheen and came to look upon the costly enterprise as a bottomless pit devouring all the wealth ground out of Java, the "fresh-milking cow." In 1880, General van der Heide wrote to his government: "I have conquered the land, but not the people." It is safe to assume that if the natives were supplied with adequate artillery, they would make short work of the Dutch and drive them out of their country as speedily as they did the Portuguese in olden times—in a single night.

The purpose of the detail now on its way to Mandaheling was to reinforce the troops holding in check Tuanku Abu, an Achinese leader, and his ally, Tibung, a pang-ulu of the Korah Battahs. Tibung one day suggested to a Dutch controller that the latter's government furnish him with two hundred rifles, with which he

proposed to arm his men and to help the Dutch in their warfare against the Achinese. The controller obtained the consent of his government to deliver the required arms and ammunition to the wily Battah chieftain who kept his word and carried on a lively campaign against Tuanku Abu, whose men were eaten when captured. After several successes on the part of Pang-Ulu Tibang against the Achinese, the former made other demands, which were acceded to, but never fulfilled, by the Dutch, because, in the meantime, Tuanku Abu had approached the Dutch in a diplomatic manner, offering to cease battling against them and to turn his arms against the Battahs, provided he was allowed to supply himself with two boatloads of ammunition from Singapore. The Dutch, in the hope of conquering the Battah country with Tuanku Abu's help, allowed him to supply himself with the sinews of war from the coast, and to proceed against Pang-Ulu Tibang. Instead of fighting the cannibal chief, however, Tuanku Abu concluded an offensive and defensive treaty against the Dutch with him. The garrisons of the forts in the vicinity of Lake Tobah were disagreeably surprised when they had to face the attacks of Achinese and of the Battahs at the same time.

The night preceding the arrival of the detail at its destination the men as well as the women had a disagreeable time of it. The



day was fast declining and a kadoo was still some distance off, when a heavy shower set in, drenching all to the skin, before atap sheds could be improvised. Shielding themselves as well as possible from the torrents pouring down from the dark, riftless cloud overspreading the whole heavens, they waited patiently for the cessation of the rain. The task of reaching the kadoo before utter darkness set in was an arduous one. The depressions formed by the road when winding through the intervals between two hills were covered with mud and water, from which the oxen alone were unable to extricate the carts,

so that the soldiers had to exert all their strength to get the vehicles on higher and drier ground. In marching over the inundated por-

tions of the road the women frequently sank knee-deep into the mire. The Amboinese women especially, who are very fastidious about their personal appearance, frequently lost all patience, when the mud spattered all over their pretty sarongs and jackets. Hungry, tired and thirsty, the detail at last reached the kadoo, which, however, was in a deplorable condition, the rain having made holes in the weather-worn roof and formed pools of water in the interior. The little cooking required to satisfy the wants of the natives was done on large field stones hastily gathered together, their clothing was washed and hung up to dry, camp fires were lit, sentinels armed to the teeth placed around the encampment, and all not on guard duty gave themselves up to sleep. The fatigues of the trip had taken away from Kromo Wonzon all desire to institute games of chance.

On the morning of the last day's march the sun rose above a cloudless sky, and the men skirmished about early in search of game for breakfast, the meat portion of which consisted of hogs, dogs and frogs. The Amboinese captured some wild dogs, which are very plentiful in Sumatra; the whites shot a wild hog and the Javanese captured scores of large bull-frogs. The bow-wows, the grunTERS and the croakers were rapidly dressed for roasting and eaten with much relish by the hungry travellers. Brullier, who had bought a trained monkey at Fort de Kock, sent the latter up the tall cocoanut palms for the purpose of throwing down the fruits of that noble tree. The monkey, nicknamed Meester Kees by the Dutch, was fastened to a chain around his body and climbed up the tree with great rapidity. When he had reached the leafy crest of the palm, and squatted himself comfortably on one of the branches, the monkey cautiously took hold of a nut with both hands and shook it and balanced it carefully as if to test its virtues. If he found the fruit to be unripe, he would gaze down on his master with a grin and make for the next nut, which he tested in the same manner and threw down after twisting it off its stem, provided it was ripe.

Late in the afternoon, the bastions of Mandaheling rose to view and were hailed with joy by the detail as the end of an exceedingly unpleasant journey through a wild country, devoid of all charms even for the unpretentious natives.



CHAPTER X.

A MILITARY CHESS-BOARD.



THROUGH the hostile portion of Sumatra, extending from the harbor of Oleh-Leh on the northwestern extremity to the southern shores of Lake Tobah, the Dutch have built, during the past twenty years, a network of forts, which are situated as near as possible to the centers of the various mokims, or counties, into which the northern half of the island is subdivided. The most important chain of forts extends from Oleh-Leh to Indrapuri along either side of the Acheen river, which arises in the mountains near the western coast and winds its way through the swamps flanked by the Gleh-Rajah on the west and low hills on the east. The strongest and most important fortress and base of operations and supplies is Kota-Rajah, "The Royal City," which is situated about ten miles southeast of Oleh-Leh. At intervals of a day's march, in nearly a straight line, are the forts of Lembaru, Anak-Galooeng, Samagani, Tjot-Basetool, Gleh-Kambing, Djerrier and Indrapuri. The last named fort lies between the Gleh-Rajah on the west and the Krintjes mountains on the south and the Achinese kampongs of Selimon and Muru, the residence of the sultan of Acheen, on the east. South of Indrapuri and due west of Lake Tobah are the forts of Simpanoli and Mandaheling. West of a line, the terminal points of which are Lembaru and Tjoy-Basetool, is a chain of forts including Lepong-Ara, Krong-Rawa, Bookit-Sabon and Tjot-Gue. Along the Straits of Malacca, through the country of the Pedirese, who are the darkest-hued of the Achinese tribes, and are known as pirates by excellence, extends a third chain of forts, beginning with Edi, some distance north of Deli, and including Lampermi, Sagli, Teluk-Semawi and Samalanga. About half way between the Acheen river and the Straits of Malacca is a chain of forts comprising Sinalope, Montassi-West, and Pantekarang. All these forts are manned, according to their strategic importance, by garrisons varying in strength all the way from a company to one or more battalions.

Kota-Rajah is the seat of the governor of Acheen and was chosen by the Dutch as their headquarters not alone on account of its natural advantages, but more especially on account of the prestige the possession of that place gave them in the eyes of the natives, it being the burial-place of their sultans and therefore considered

by them a city more sacred to them than Mecca itself. In the center of the city is situated the Kraton, or the fortress proper, which covers about a square mile and is surrounded by a stone wall eighteen inches thick and ten feet high. It contains teakwood barracks, the governor's residence and the burial ground of the Achinese sultans. The latter is marked by a small elevation in one corner of the fortress. The graves of the sultans and of their wives and children are designated by small white sandstone monuments of pyramidal shape, bearing inscriptions noting the names, dates of birth and death and reign of the various sovereigns.

The Acheen river flows directly underneath the walls of the Kraton, where it is narrowed by sluices to check its course and produce a higher stage of water in the dry season to prevent the exhalation of noxious miasma. Within a radius of about five miles from the fortress the ground is hard, dry and cleared of vegetation with the exception of necessary shade-trees.

Kota-Rajah is divided into a number of large kampongs, peopled by soldiers, Malay, Javanese and Chinese traders. Close to the passar, or market-place, is a big missigit, or Mohammedan mosque, built by the Dutch at a cost of one million guilders in order to cater to the religious tastes of the pious Achinese Moslem in the vicinity. It is a stately edifice and none except Achinese are allowed to cross its threshold. From a big tamarind tree near the cemetery of the sultans is still suspended a large bell with a Portuguese inscription. The rust of three centuries has eaten a big hole into the bell, which is supposed to have been taken from a Portuguese vessel by the navy of Iskander Muda, who ruled over Acheen from 1606 to 1636 and possessed an immense pirate fleet.

Indrapuri is a small fort built by the Portuguese under Vasco de Gama. It consists of a stone wall four feet in diameter and ten feet high and encloses a space sufficiently large to shelter fifty men. Indrapuri is one of the most ancient European structures in the East Indies.

Mandaheling is a fort situated on one of the tributaries of the Acheen river in the broad valley lying between the Gleh-Rajah and the Krintjes mountains, about forty miles west of the southern shore of Lake Tobah. It has a permanent garrison of about three hundred men, representing all shades of East Indian mercenaries, and occupies an area of about three acres. The fort contains five barracks built of palm-logs, with atap roofs, the officers' quarters, a big canteen, the residence of the local controller, and a number of smaller structures used for various purposes. There are two entrances, one at the north and one at the south. In each of two diagonally opposite corners is a bastion, which is made of sandbags held in place by iron rods driven through them perpendicularly and secured at the top by horizontal bars. On each bastion a big gun with a semicircular sweep looks threateningly upon the sur-

rounding country. From the center of the fort two mortars are always ready to pour a shower of grape and canister upon the foe stealing his way through the neighboring forests.

The fort is encircled by a palm-log fence ten feet high and supplied with loop-holes for the rifles. The fence again is shielded from approach by a network of barbed wire fencing four feet high and twenty feet in width, and by four rows of the thorniest variety of cactuses. As a supplementary precaution, the ground covered by the barbed wire fencing and the cactuses is thickly strewn with broken bottles, thus rendering an assault a hazardous undertaking for the naked limbs of the Achinese and Battahs. The soldiers, accordingly, considered drinking a patriotic duty, because every bottle, as soon as emptied, was cast among the cactuses, where every fragment of glass increased the security of the garrison.

The stream flowing past the fort has no specific name and is simply called Kali, the river. In the rainy season its waters rise considerably and frequently overflow the sandy banks. In the dry season the current is slow and the low stage of the water exposes a portion of the sandy bottom, in which shining bits of gold glitter temptingly in the noonday sun. When off duty, the men would frequently supply themselves with tin pans and felt sacks, wade out to the sand bars and wash out bits of the yellow metal, which they immediately exchanged for commodities at the Chinese tokos, or stores, in the vicinity of the fort. When the stream was at high water, the Chinese traders would scour the river with dragnets for the four or five kinds of palatable fish abounding in it, against which the soldiers, who had to content themselves with ensnaring the finny tribe with the modest reel, in vain protested.

The camp of the Javanese troops formed an addition to the fort on the east and was enclosed by a plain palm-log stockade. A short distance beyond this was a Chinese kampong, the magnet of attraction for the soldiers and their wives. Its area was about equal to that of the fort, the guns of which protected it. It contained some thirty houses built in the native style, of bamboo framework with atap roofs, and half a dozen tokos, or stores, built of teakwood by Chinese carpenters, and constructed with special regard to strength so as to exclude and offer greater resistance to any horde of Achinese or Battahs that might succeed in finding their way into the village in spite of the proximity of a military post. The kampong was peopled by a few Chinese army contractors, traders and opium dealers, a hundred Javanese and Chinese coolies who worked on the roads, and a score or two of chain-boys. In each of the four corners of the kampong there was a so-called Cossack-post, consisting of a rectangular platform about ten feet long and six feet wide and resting on teakwood posts about ten or twelve feet above the ground. Each Cossack-post was guarded by one white and three native soldiers, who were on duty for twenty-four

hours at a time, from sunset to sunset. The platform is reached by means of a ladder which the men draw up after them and place on hooks fastened to the sides of the platform. The purpose of these posts is to protect the kampong from unwelcome guests as well as to keep a watchful eye on the Celestials who are ever ready to smuggle over to the Achinese and Battahs opium and ammunition obtained from the soldiers, in exchange for gold, diamonds and tobacco. The Chinese shopkeepers sell anything there is any demand for, and the white soldiers frequently resort to the underground dens connected with some of the tokos in order to continue their debaucheries after they have had their fill at the canteen, while their native comrades in arms go there to seek temporary obliviousness in the opium pipe.

Sing Wong, the son of a Chinese father and a Javanese mother, was an army contractor doing a thriving business at Mandaheling by robbing the government as well as its servants. One day he sent word to the native soldiers that he would entertain them and their wives and children gratuitously. The natives duly came in the evening and were treated in the open space surrounding Sing Wong's toko with cigars, cakes and sweets, while the Javanese musicians under the leadership of Kromo Wonzon produced an ear-splitting series of discords on their musical instruments. The pleasing sensations produced by the consumption of articles saturated with opium created in the natives an appetite for more of the same kind and gave Sing Wong an opportunity to offer them for sale small boxes containing samples of the drug. It frequently happens that, in order to obtain the coveted article, the natives will not only spend their last duit, but even sell their clothing and deliver up their children to the dark passions of the conscienceless Chinese. The chain-boys even will invest in opium the miserable pittance they receive for their convict labor in order to forget for the time being the wretchedness of their lot, only to be more forcibly reminded of it upon awakening from their stupor by the lashes they are certain to receive at the hands of the provost-marshal.

Beneath the shade of tall waringi, palm and tamarind groves on the other side of the river, were nestled several kampongs of the Korah Battahs. Living in the immediate vicinity of a strong military post, these members of a cannibal tribe were compelled to observe a respectful and friendly attitude towards the masters of the country. Every forenoon a large contingent of men, women and children from the neighboring kampongs would appear on the highway near the fort and offer for sale the products of their gardens, sugar, tobacco, fruits and vegetables. The Battahs manufacture a peculiar kind of very strong chewing tobacco, which they sell in the shape of long, thin coils. They carry with them small brass scales, into one side of which they place a plug of tobacco,

while the purchaser is expected to put its weight in copper pence into the other side.

The soldiers were distributed among the various barracks according to color and nationality. Between the officers' quarters and the barracks was a large canteen, at one end of which was a stage utilized for amateur theatricals. The white soldiers, who formed nearly one-half of the garrison of Mandaheling, consisted of Dutchmen, Germans, Belgians, Austrians, Swiss, Frenchmen and sprinklings of other European nationalities. Great Britain, however, was not represented. In order to relieve the monotony of garrison life in the wilds of Sumatra, the officers encouraged the men in the formation of social clubs, in which the members contributed to their mutual entertainment according to their ability and without fear of severe criticism of the artistic merits of their performances. The German club enjoyed the special protection of Captain van Leuwen, who delighted in listening to Teutonic melodies. The Frenchmen and Belgians piqued themselves on their rendition of opera bouffe selections and enjoyed the protection of Lieutenant Verhaalen. The latter had the reputation of being a gallomaniac. The Dutch club was under the protection of Captain van Houten, the commander of the fort, and vainly strove to snatch the laurel from its rivals. The emulation among the three clubs was of a perfectly friendly nature, however, the objective point never lost sight of by them being the donation by the officers of the largest quantity of liquid refreshments at the close of the stage performances given in turn once in a fortnight by the various clubs.

The women, although entirely devoted to the men, whose fatigues they to a great extent shared, could not, however, in spite of all endeavors, be persuaded to pose before the footlights and delight the audiences with an Amboinese song or a Javanese dance.

The German club generally acted some blood-curdling drama, interspersed with comic scenes and adapted for the equatorial stage by one Hartwig, a native of Magdeburg, who also possessed some skill at improvising couplets satyrizing the events of the day. On such days, the entire garrison, save those on guard duty, filled the canteen with a gay confusion of complexions, costumes, languages, and manners, to which the women and the children present contributed not a little. The officers and their *njonjas* occupied the seats of honor next to the stage. Back of them sat at long tables the whites and the natives and their female companions of diverse hues, arrayed in their best attire and bedecked with all their jewelry, laughing, chattering and tittering, and emphatically applauding at the close of each part, whether they had thoroughly understood the same or not. Between the acts the canteen resounded with the clinking of glasses and unrestrained hilarity. At the close of a performance, which generally lasted from eight o'clock in the evening until midnight, the officers would reward the

performers according to the measure in which they had been entertained by them by inviting them to drink as much as they liked. It was not an uncommon occurrence to see the actors in the morning lying under the tables occupied by their audience the night previous.



CHAPTER XI.

SERGEANT SLONDERWACHT'S DANGER.



SHORTLY after the arrival of the reinforcements at Mandaheling a long procession of Battah men and women, headed by the pang-ulu, or chief, of Simpanoli, a kampong lying between the fort and Lake Tobah, appeared on the scene one morning and asked for the tuwan besaar, or commander of the fort. Behind Butu, the pang-ulu, marched two lads who produced a frightful noise on soolings, instruments resembling clarionets. They were followed by four oxen gaily decorated with lemons stuck at the ends of their horns and with festoons of melatti flowers wound about their necks. Captain van Houten was apprized of the coming of the strange caravan and addressed the pang-ulu in Malay, the language universally understood by the natives as well as by the Mongolians and Caucasians who have resided for any length of time in the East Indian archipelago.

"Whither goest thou?" the captain asked the pang-ulu.

"I have brought you four of my finest oxen which I offer you in exchange for the beautiful fat man standing over there," was the reply of the naive Pang-Ulu Butu, who accompanied his words by pointing to Sergeant Slonderwacht, a member of the captain's retinue.

Some of the pang-ulu's men, who had been bringing their products to market at the fort, had for many a weary day been casting longing, cannibalistic glances at the portly figure of the tall, fat, blue-eyed and blond-haired Dutch sergeant, whom they regarded as the most toothsome morsel of the season when once in their possession and properly carved into steaks. After much deliberation as to how to obtain possession of that choice piece of humanity, the Battahs and their leading men advised the sending of a formal embassy to the commander of the fort and to offer the latter four fine oxen as the price for his sleekest and fattest sergeant. The savages were of the sincere opinion that the commander possessed

absolute power of life and death over his subordinates and that he would not hesitate to strike a bargain advantageous to his purse.

When Sergeant Slonderwacht heard the pang-ulu's urgent prayer for the exchange of his precious self for a quartette of oxen, his cheeks turned pale, his limbs trembled, his breath grew short and his eyes blurred, not because there was the slightest danger that his superior officer, with whom he had emptied countless flasks of gin, would ever lower his dignity by considering even for a moment such a preposterous offer, but because he knew that the Battahs, after they had once taken a fancy to the idea of converting him into a roast, would not cease their efforts to secure possession of his person and would resort to stealth or force at the earliest opportunity to gain their object. He looked beseechingly at his captain, but said nothing and thought of the vast sums it cost the Dutch government to enlist and transport able-bodied whites from Harderweyk to the Achinese frontier.

The men and officers surrounding the captain were burning with eagerness to plunge upon the man-eaters and riddle them with bullets or transfix them with their bayonets, but the commander held them in check with a wave of his hand and told the pang-ulu: "The fat man you want belongs to the Sultan of Negri Blanda. I cannot give him to you. My orders are that if you ever come here again with a similar demand, to have every one of you shot on the spot."

In order to appease the pang-ulu, who was allowed to depart in peace with his men, the captain gave him several rixthalers as a matter of policy. The ghouls returned to their haunts in a sad frame of mind, while Sergeant Slonderwacht was transferred to another post in order to take a temptation away from the eyes of the cannibals.

Captain van Houten, a tall, muscular Dutchman, whose body was compared by his men to an old fort, returned to his quarters, where he related the incident to his housekeeper Si-Lida, a pretty Javanese girl of sixteen years, whose stub nose, black eyes and raven tresses had gained the complete ascendancy over the Caucasian warrior who rarely was perfectly sober. Whenever the captain returned from an expedition, Si-Lida washed his clothes in the stream after first going through all his pockets and relieving them of their contents, while her lord was sleeping off the effects of the gin with which she served him. The dashing Javanese woman then put on her diamond rings, flaming red jacket, flowered sorong, gilded girdle and slippers (for in spite of the law and the presence of the controller she dressed as she pleased) and hastened to the camp of the Javanese, where she passed the time in playing at dice with Kromo Wonzon until the hour in which the captain had to

receive the reports of his officers arrived. She possessed an almost hypnotic power over him and was not at all fastidious about the means she employed in waking him from his profound slumbers, often resorting to cuffs and blows, which he received with good grace as a mark of her deep affection for him. Saufhaus and a Javanese soldier even claimed to have seen the captain late at night washing Si-Lida's clothes in the stream.

At night a Battah spy in the service of the Dutch informed the controller that the pang-ulu of Simpanoli had gathered all his men for an attack upon an Achinese kampong some distance east of Indrapuri and would be absent for a week or more. The controller at once seized the favorable opportunity for erecting a fort at Simpanoli, which lay on elevated ground in a densely wooded hilly district and would form an additional bulwark against the Achinese. Accordingly, the neighboring forts were immediately signalled to for reinforcements of the detachment which was to set out from Mandaheling early the next morning and reach the coveted spot as early as possible by forced marches.

When the women and the young people, who had remained behind at Simpanoli while the warriors set out on an expedition against an Achinese village, saw a long line of Dutch troops cutting their way through the rembu, they gathered up whatever few articles of utility they possessed and wandered with their cattle to a more remote spot, where they built a new kampong in a short space of time.

As soon as the Dutch had reached the deserted village, they cut down the Battah houses and erected on their sites a small fort capable of sheltering a hundred men and the usual retinue of an East Indian body of troops. While the coolies were sawing a log of teakwood into boards to be used in framing a strong dwelling for Lieutenant Schwarzenberg and Njonja Augusta, the Javanese suddenly suspended work and told the mandoor, or overseer, that they had heard the wood sing, which to their minds was a manifestation of the spirit inhabiting the log. The case was reported to the lieutenant, who respected their prejudices and ordered them to use their axes instead of their saws on the next log, in order to avoid "hearing the spirits sing." He promised the workmen, however, that he would cause the singing log to be duly decorated and transported to their missigit in the camp at Mandaheling.

Before the sun set behind the distant peaks of the Gleh-Rajah the fort was completed. The troops accompanying the artisans and the men destined to man the fort camped on the ground during the night. In the morning Capt. Van Houten led a reconnoitering expedition into the Battah country towards the northern shores of Lake Tobah. He was actuated by curiosity rather than by a sense of military duty in undertaking the excursion, which

proved to be highly interesting to him as well as to his men. After a few hours' marching under the direction of a Battah guide, a clearing on the top of a lofty hill was reached, and the magnificent panorama of Lake Tobah exposed to view.

In the distance, thousands of feet below the ground on which the Dutch commander ordered a brief halt, the blue waves of a great Alpine lake, hemmed in on all sides by steep and forbidding precipices, reflected the rays of the morning sun. Dazzled by the sublime spectacle before him, the captain took up his field glass and scrutinized all portions of the matchless scene of volcanic desolation in the midst of nature's greatest luxuriance. The basin of the lake was once the crater of an immense volcano, in which, after it had ceased to deluge the territory about it with streams of lava, water gathered. The shores of the lake rose almost perpendicularly to the height of several thousand feet and were devoid of vegetation. Lake Tobah is about fifty miles long and fifteen miles wide and contains a large island, twenty-five miles long and ten miles wide,

separated from the main land by narrow and shallow channels and virtually dividing the lake into two distinct bodies of water. The northerly portion of the island does not project out of the waters of the lake to any great extent. It is covered with an exuberant growth of trees and shrubs, in strange contrast to the naked bluish-tinted walls of rock guarding the approach to the alluring curls of the ever-changing surface of that mysterious lake. An air of youthfulness and virginity permeates the entire landscape. Nature still appears in her pristine garb, when out of desolate lava beds her all-powerful will first conjured forth seas and streams and verdure. By a strange coincidence, the inhabitants of

the beautiful island of Ambarita, which rises like an emerald out of the azure deep, are still immersed in one of the lowest stages of human development—cannibalism. The island is noted as the home by excellence of this atrocious custom in the land of the Battahs.



Southward into the northern basin of Lake Tobah stretches a peninsula three miles long and half a mile wide. It has the shape of an immense hammer formed of gigantic cliffs. The wonderfully clear atmosphere revealed the many-tinted outlines of the verdant and gentle slopes of the Island of Ambarita, which was thickly studded with Battah kampongs from which no unprotected stranger ever departs alive, the steep and indented shores bounding on the eastern side of the lake a plateau dotted with the cones of small extinct volcanoes, and the changeful hues of a wind-swept lake that has no known outlet. After gazing for a while with mute admiration at the weird and grotesque scene of grandeur, the troops resumed their homeward march.

At noon a brief stop was made at a native village, where the troops enjoyed such refreshments as the Battahs could offer. The captain was resting in the shade of a big tamarind tree and observing Brullier's trained monkey harvesting cocoanuts on the lofty palms for his men. Of a sudden a trumpet signal interrupted the silence of the rembu. The captain, anxious to learn the cause of the alarm, hastily got on his feet and ordered the nearest sergeant to find out what was up. The latter gathered a squad of men, who retraced their steps on the trail leading to the village until they came across several cavalymen searching for Trooper Wueppken, a native of Mecklenburg. Carefully reconnoitering the neighboring *alang-alang* fields, they finally found the lost trooper standing next to a pit, scratching his arms and legs and gazing about him with a disconsolate air. A glance was sufficient for Wueppken's discoverers to realize his predicament. He had fallen somewhat behind while approaching the village and when seeking to catch up had rode at a gallop. Neither he nor his Macassar charger observed a pit, which had in former days probably served as a cellar for a Battah dwelling, and which was concealed from view by the dense vegetation, thus causing the animal to fall into the pit with its hind legs first so that only its head protruded, while Wueppken was thrown from his seat against a stump and slightly bruised. Wueppken exerted himself to the utmost to extricate his horse, but failed, because the pit was deep and narrow. His situation, although ludicrous, was extremely unpleasant, for, if he returned to his squad without his horse, he would incur the risk of severe censure, besides having the value of the beast deducted from his pay. If he remained until assistance arrived, he ran the risk not only of being declared a deserter, but of enjoying the doubtful hospitality of the Battahs. Like a brave trooper, who was unwilling to leave to its fate the faithful steed which had carried him through many hundreds of miles of hill and dale, he resolved to wait a reasonable time for succor before consulting his own safety. He was overjoyed at the timely approach of his comrades, whose united efforts soon succeeded in rescuing the beast

from its open grave. When the mishap was reported to the captain, the latter laughed heartily over the ludicrous position into which an abandoned Battah cellar had brought one of his bravest troopers. He cheered up Wueppken by offering him his own gin flask, a sure indication that no censure was in store for him.



CHAPTER XII.

THE BATTAH CANNIBALS.



THE plateau extending for some distance in all directions from the diadem of barren rocks encircling the romantic waters of Lake Tobah is the abode of the Independent Battahs, that most peculiar and interesting people, who, despite their cannibalism, have attained a higher mark in the scale of culture than most of the neighboring tribes. Shut off from direct contact with the outer world by their geographical position in the midst of a mountain-encircled plateau, their institutions, which consider every stranger an enemy and an outlaw, have done the rest to complete their isolation. The Dutch government, though able to do so, has hitherto made no systematic attempt to suppress the practice of cannibalism on the Island of Ambarita and along the southern and western shores of Lake Tobah. Frei-

herr von Brenner, an Austrian traveller, while crossing the island from Deli to Siboga in 1887, was so impressed with this fact that, in a work published seven years later, he formally called the attention of the Dutch government to the ease with which cannibalism could be abolished, saying that the placing of an armed steam cutter on Lake Tobah would suffice to hold the anthropophagous natives in check. It appears that, until very recent times at least, the Dutch preferred to delay the necessary missionary labors until their railroad system, which is rapidly being extended throughout Sumatra, penetrated into the lands of the Independent Battahs.

The history and descent of this peculiar Malay tribe is involved in darkness. The main pursuit of the Battahs is agriculture, the principal products being rice, maize, cotton and tobacco. They also raise cattle and chickens and carry on some trading with the Achinese. Their houses are built of bamboo with atap roofs and rest on posts with the gable side facing the road. Although frequently as much as one hundred feet in length, the interior of a house forms

but one room. In front of their houses, which are entered through a trap-door, are a shed and an open kitchen. The cattle are sheltered beneath the house, which is frequently supplied with an attic serving as a granary. Books and other articles of value are kept in their meeting-house. Bamboo and earthen vessels and torches and lamps are their only domestic conveniences. The heads of slaughtered foes are suspended from the ceiling. Rivers and ravines they bridge with rattan cables.

Prior to the encroachments of the Dutch upon their territory, the weapons of the Battahs consisted of bows and arrows and shields. In recent times smugglers have supplied them with firearms of modern construction. The Battahs dress much like the Javanese, but leave the upper part of the body uncovered. The women wear nothing but a sarong. Their ornaments consist of ivory rings, shells and copper wire. Gold ornaments are worn by the wealthy only. The teeth of both sexes are filed down about one-half at the age of puberty. The women manufacture earthenware and weave and spin on Indian looms, besides attending to all household and field work.

Politically, the kampongs of the Battahs are autonomic and independent of each other. The authority of the chief is generally acknowledged only in times of war. In times of peace the will of the people, as expressed in the assemblies of the free and adult males, is predominant. Their chiefs, called pang-ulus, occasionally rule over several kampongs. They acknowledge a sultan, whose power is merely nominal, however. The soil is common property, only the right to use it being inheritable and mortgageable to a member of the same community. Women, slaves, debtors and children have no political rights. Their system of justice is much like that of the Malays, with the exception that cannibalism is a legally acknowledged institution. This punishment is meted out to spies, adulterers, traitors, burglars and especially prisoners of war. The latter are eaten alive, after first being tied to a wooden cross with extended arms and legs and hacked to pieces with knives and axes. The bits of meat torn from the quivering limbs of their victims are dipped into a mixture of salt water and lemon juice and devoured raw. Formerly the Battahs ate their old and sick relatives, after forcing them to mount a tree upon which they were shaken down and clubbed to death. During this performance they sang "The time is come, the fruit is ripe, it must come down." They excused their action towards superannuated relatives by saying that they devoured them from pious motives, not desiring the worms in the ground to eat them.

The Battahs are distinguished from the Javanese by greater openness, independence and manliness, which make them impatient, dis-

obedient and prone to quarrels, although they are otherwise faithful, reliable, good-natured and grateful. The Battahs are free from the jealousy, sensuality and gullibility of the Javanese, who are more cowardly, vain and hard-hearted than the former. They are attached to their place of birth and to their family, honest in their dealings, and by turns lazy, careless and extravagantly liberal. Wives are obtained in marriage by purchase from their parents, and may be pawned for the debts of the husband. Polygamy is allowed, although a Battah has seldom more than two wives.

The Battah method of declaring war consists in fastening to a post by the wayside a cane and a human face carved out of wood. They are a warlike people, the several villages frequently making war upon each other. Their champions, that is, those appointed to take lead in battle, are dressed in white. Among the Pak-Pak Battahs, their place is supplied by a small wooden picture painted over with the remnants of a decayed human head buried in the ground. The manufacture and consecration of one of those magic wands, the possession of which is supposed to give them additional power, is linked with ceremonies of the most atrocious character. In order that the wand may attain its magic attributes, the men under the leadership of the guru, or priest, gather about a hole dug in the ground, in which a boy of from nine to eleven years is so placed that only his head projects. In the hot glare of the sun, salt and pepper are stuffed into the poor victim's mouth, causing great thirst. The guru then tells the boy "If you promise that your spirit will guard us after your death, we will give you drink." The boy naturally accedes to this request in the hope of securing a drink of cooling water. Instead of a refreshing draught, however, melted lead is poured down his throat and the head of the unfortunate lad is separated from the trunk and buried under a tree. Two weeks later the men again assemble, dig out the head and apply a portion of the brain matter to the upper end of the wand and to the openings representing the head and breast of the figure and seal them up with wax. With the brain, they think, also the spirit of the departed has gone over into the wand.

The religious beliefs of the Battahs are very vague and uncertain. They believe in a supreme omnipotent being, Diebata, to whom they attribute an all-wise will and the powers of creation and preservation. He is supposed to dwell in the seventh heaven, but after creating the world is supposed to have surrendered the governing of the world to three other gods, Batura Guru, Sri Padi and Mangala Bulan. The first of these governs in heaven, is the father of men and has helped to form the earth, which since the beginning rested on the head of the horned snake Naga Padoha, but later was shaken off by the latter so that it sank down. The second of the three dei-

ties rules the air and the third governs the earth. This trinity, otherwise known among them as the gods of justice, mercy and the evil principle, has in turn left the regulations of the minor details in the world to a host of good and evil spirits, Diebatas and Begus, of whom the former are supposed to live in heaven and the latter in the lower regions. The trinity of their godhead, as well as the etymology of their appellations indicate a Hindoo origin. The Battahs believe that the souls of the good go to heaven, while those of the evil-doers are damned to roam about the world without rest.

One day, while Lieutenant Schwarzenberg was standing at the gate of Fort Simpanoli, a Battah holding a human skull and a smoked hand came by. Impelled by curiosity, the officer stopped him and asked:

"Whose head and hand are you carrying?"

"They belong to an enemy we killed some years ago," the Battah answered.

"Did you eat him?"

"Of course; what else do you think we did with him?"

"Who ate him?"

"Myself, my brother and his men."

"How did it come to pass?"

"We captured an Achinese straggler one day while he was trying to steal one of our oxen."

"What was done with him?"

"We bound him and took him to the chief."

"What did the chief do with him?"

"He had him put into the stocks."

"And then?"

"Then the pang-ulu had him tied to a cross and hacked the first piece of meat out of his fore-arm, which he roasted slightly over a fire and ate with great relish."

"Did the Achinese yell?"

"Frightfully; but he couldn't get away, for he was bound."

"What was done after all had carved their fill out of the body of the Achinese?"

"We cut off his head and hands and smoked them."

"What are you carrying the head and hand about with you now for?"

"I am taking the head to the skull-house."

"Why are there so few teeth in the skull?"

"We use the teeth for the covers of our sirih cases."

"What is the object of that?"

"When we shut the cases after taking out a quid, we have the same sensation as though we were striking the enemy on the mouth."

At the close of this edifying conversation, the Battah resumed

his journey, while the lieutenant walked thoughtfully to his quarters, where he meditated for a time on the various styles of depravity current in the world.



CHAPTER XIII.

THE KING'S BIRTHDAY.



THE King's birthday was celebrated at Mandahe-ling with the usual pomp and festivities. The quarters of the men and officers were gaily decorated with festoons and flowers. The soldiers received extra rations and a present of half a guilder each. Vocal and instrumental music, Oriental as well as Occidental, resounded all day long throughout the fort and the camp of the Javanese. All work except the necessary guard duty was abandoned to give way to the general merrymaking. Captain van Houten, the post commander, made speeches in honor of the day in all the languages he knew, Dutch, Malay and Javanese. He closed each harangue with an appeal to give three cheers for the king, which was responded to by the men to the echo. The Dutchmen, speculating upon an additional round of gin, placed their stout captain on a chair and raised him aloft, honoring him with three loud hurrahs. From morning until evening the canteen was packed with white soldiers who played at cards, drank, chatted, sang and danced to the music of a mighty harmonica handled by Saufhaus, a merry son of the Alps, who was always ready to burst out into a "jodler."

The Javanese and their wives, arrayed like the rest in their best attire, gave themselves up to their favorite game of dadoo. Squatted in the shade of one of the barracks was the Javanese Sergeant Simin and the Dutch Private Esshuis. They were playing for large sums. Simin was in poor luck and had lost several hundred guilders. His means were exhausted and he gazed about him with distorted features, seeking further fuel with which to keep up the game. Of a sudden he seized his ten-year-old daughter, Ayam, placed her on one of the squares of the gambling mat, and challenged the others to bid against the child. Esshuis placed one hundred guilders on the other side of the mat, the dice fell and the child became the property of Esshuis, who took her with him and placed her in charge of his old Javanese housekeeper, Ponki, as a new accession to his household.

In the Chinese kampong the gayety was not so universal as in the military camps, because during the preceding night Sing Wong, the most prominent shopkeeper in the place, had left for parts unknown

with his Battah wife and the accumulated savings of a score of Chinese coolies, who placed implicit faith in him. Sing Wong had come as a common coolie from China to Deli, where he served a term of three years on a tobacco plantation. Afterwards he came to Mandaheling, where he toiled on the road that was being constructed from that place to Pertibi. As is the custom of the Chinese coolies, they select one of their number, generally the smartest, to attend to their financial matters and take care of their earnings. Sing Wong, being a clever fellow and enjoying the confidence of his countrymen, was soon enabled to abandon manual labor and take to peddling which he carried on with considerable success among the vain native women in the military camps. Later he started a store in the Chinese settlement next to Mandaheling and succeeded in supplanting the army contractor, a countryman of his, who had amassed a small fortune at the place. Before taking French leave, Sing Wong, too, had acquired a snug sum, representing the profits of his opium smuggling and of his contracts with the quartermaster's department.

In the middle of the afternoon of that day comparative silence reigned, for the majority of the men, gorged with a liberal repast and a plenitude of libations in honor of God, king and country, had betaken themselves to their siesta to recuperate for the evening pastimes, while the officers were sitting on easy chairs on the verandas of their quarters in the company of their *njonjas*, indulging in saying sweet nothings and taking an occasional sip of champagne. It was a typical tropical afternoon. The sun had passed its meridian and the heat of the day was at its greatest. A scarcely perceptible breeze blowing from the distant peaks of the Gleh-Rajah did little towards mitigating the stifling effects of the torrid atmosphere. The river flowing past the fort appeared to have ebbed away before the heat and displayed countless shining sand bars, on which occasionally a rhinoceros-bird alighted preparatory to taking a bath in its murky waters. The waringi trees on the other side of the stream reared their giant trunks far above the leafy crests of the tall cocoanut palms, which in turn looked down upon the smaller shade trees and underbrush. An air of idyllic, soporific peacefulness seemed to have permeated the little world of Mandaheling, in which only the sentinels passing to and fro on the elevated platforms inside the stockade appeared mindful of the fact that "vipers hide 'neath the roses."

Through the alang-alang field lining the rembu which approached close to the side of the fort furthest away from the stream, an Achinese warrior stole his way unseen towards the fort. At his side he carried a machette-like sword and in one hand he carried an ebony lance with an iron point. He wore black trousers, shaped like those of a zouave, and a sarong striped white and red and wound like a shawl about his waist. His white jacket was adorned

with gilded buttons. A triangular trimming on both legs of his trousers revealed his rank, that of a panglima, or chief of several kampongs in the Achinese domain. His raven black hair fell down to his shoulders and was crowned by a turban hidden beneath a tall, straw fez. The latter resembled a small, inverted basket without a handle. A bunch of silver keys attached to his slendang, a kind of sash worn about the back and shoulders, was an additional emblem of his dignity. He was very tall and sinewy, and his fiery black eyes and hawk nose indicated great courage and determination.

On the platform next to the main gate a Javanese sentinel was dreamily pacing to and fro, without a suspicion that a foe was lying



in ambush like a tiger waiting for a favorable opportunity to leap upon his prey. The Achinese had crawled through the alang-alang up to within a few rods of the sentinel and waited for a moment when the latter had turned his back towards him. The moment came and the dusky warrior leaped in great bounds to the stockade which he sought to scale with the aid of his lance. In a second or two, the Achinese, using his lance as a climbing-pole, had his hands on the top of the fence and was about to raise up his body to leap upon the platform, when the sentinel turned about and saw the lone intruder. The sentinel was not a novice in the tricks of the Achinese and did not stop to ask for passwords or explanations, but fired his gun at the panglima without a moment's

hesitation. A bullet struck the latter in the knee, he reeled, slid back on his lance to the ground and hobbled across the road towards the alang-alang. The report of the gun brought the sergeant-major, who was resting in the guard-house close to the gate, to his feet. Rushing to the platform, he beheld the retreating figure of the Achinese and fired another shot at him. The bullet struck the Achinese in the side, mortally wounding him. Dropping his weapons, he sank to the ground with extended arms, gasping for breath and uttering inarticulate sounds. While this was going on, an alarm was given and a lieutenant with a cocked revolver in his hand, accompanied by a dozen men with loaded guns and fixed bayonets sallied out of the gate to ascertain whether any more Achinese were in hiding about the fort. They returned after assuring themselves that the unfortunate panglima had attacked the fort single-handed. The latter was brought before Captain van Houten on a stretcher. He was writhing in agony, the wild rolling of his eyes accompanying the distortion of his features. He felt that his days were numbered and that his agonies caused rejoicing in the hearts of his enemies watching his last moments. This made him deaf to the pressing questions put to him by the Dutch officers who sought to learn the motives of his peculiar conduct. "Saya jedi orang brani putul," "I am indeed a brave man," were the only words he muttered to himself while his life ebbed away. The Achinese chief, who had attempted to gain an entrance to the fort and cut down as many Dutch soldiers as possible, was, in the parlance of the East Indies, an "amuck-maker," one who consecrates himself to certain death which he seeks to celebrate by killing as many others as he can reach with his weapons before the inevitable doom overtakes him. He lived for four hours after he was wounded, and was buried in the cemetery reserved for the chain-boys.

The daring assault of the lone Achinese marred to some extent the quiet enjoyment of the balance of the day, for the officers as well as the men knew that an attack on a larger scale was almost certain to follow. Nothing occurred, however, until nine o'clock in the evening, when an old Achinese woman, dressed in black, approached the gate of the fort with a torch in one hand and a sealed letter in the other. She was accosted by the sentinels with the customary "Who goes there?" to which she replied "Parampuan Atjeh," "An Achinese woman." The sentinels thereupon gave three raps on the tom-tom, or hollow segment of a tree, with which every sentinel's post is fitted out, which brought out the lieutenant and his guard who took the woman before the controller and the captain. The letter contained a note from Tuanku Abu, informing them that he would attack their fort with two hundred men that night. On the envelope was written with a lead pencil: "I will return to-night. Preiss."

It is one of the customs of the Achinese to notify their enemies prior to attacking them, although their operations are not confined to the time and place indicated in their warning messages. Preiss was a young man of twenty-three years, a native of Luxembourg, who had enlisted from pure love of adventure and deserted his colors at Anak-Galooeng about a year ago and sought his fortune with the Achinese. The latter, however, failed to discover in him any elements of usefulness and treated him rather harshly, so that he availed himself of the earliest opportunity to escape from their midst and return to a Dutch post in spite of the noose certain to contract his neck upon his appearance. He had met the old woman on the way and written the line apprizing the Dutch of his intended return to the flag on the back of the message she bore to Mandaheling.

All necessary precautions to give the enemy, in case he should appear, a suitable reception, were taken. Only whites were selected for guard duty that night and the rest instructed to hold themselves ready to fly to their allotted posts at a moment's notice. The sky was cloudless and revealed the heavenly constellations in all their glory. With the exception of the noises made by the denizens of the wilderness and the sounds of the monotonous music produced by the natives in the adjacent kampongs, all was quiet until about eleven o'clock at night, when musketry fire mingled with the wild warhoops of the Achinese was heard northwest of the fort. "Mad-joo, Blanda!" "Come on, Whites!" was the defiant battle-cry of the natives who fired at the fort from out of treetops and behind bushes and stumps of trees. The entire garrison was immediately called to arms and returned the Achinese fire with volleys through the loop-holes of the stockade. Above the din of the musketry fire sounded the loud boom of the big guns loaded with canister. Soon cries of "Tandoo! Tandoo!" "The stretcher! the stretcher!" were heard on the Achinese side, but the firing was kept up incessantly for several hours. Of a sudden, it ceased for a few minutes, only to be continued from the opposite direction, across the stream. After killing four soldiers, three chain-boys, a woman and a child, the Achinese withdrew, taking all their dead and wounded with them.

While Mandaheling was being attacked by the Achinese under Tuanku Abu, the Battahs under the leadership of Pang-ulu Tibang were harassing Simpanoli, which was defended by fifty men under the command of Lieutenant Schwarzenberg. Towards morning the Achinese forces retreating from Mandaheling joined the Battahs in their attack upon Simpanoli, but did little execution. While the fighting was going on, signals by means of colored lanterns suspended from lofty poles were exchanged between the two forts, but each place gave the other to understand that it could hold its own. The enemy left the vicinity of Simpanoli shortly before daybreak.

In the morning, Preiss, the deserter, appeared before the gates of

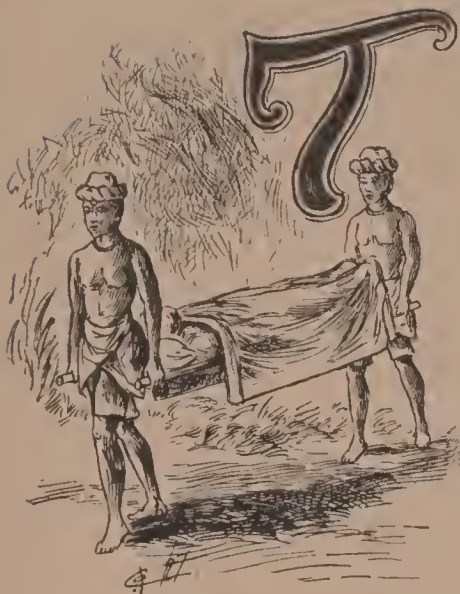
Mandaheling and was greeted by the jeers and hisses of his former comrades in arms. He was immediately handcuffed and brought into the presence of the captain and the controller. Many questions were put to him. Preiss told his superiors that he had been treated very meanly by the Achinese and preferred to die on the gallows among the Dutch than live longer among the fanatical followers of Mahomet. The valuable portion of the information secured from Preiss touched a hadji and a tuanku, who were stirring up the fanaticism and prejudices of the Achinese at Anak-Gleh and inculcating into them the belief that on a certain day the powder of the Dutch at Mandaheling would be wet and that they could then take that stronghold by assault.

Preiss was sick and covered with boils and his trial by court martial postponed for six months. At the expiration of that time, he was tried, found guilty of desertion and sentenced to death on the gallows.



CHAPTER XIV.

CROSS, CRESCENT, CANNIBALISM AND CANISTER.



THE black balls of the optical signal apparatus at Mandaheling were soon bobbing up and down and conveying the report of the events of the night and of the information obtained from Preiss along the signal stations of the intervening forts to Gleh-Kambing, the seat of District Commander Colonel van der Pool. The latter immediately caused the commander at Fort Indrapuri, which was only a few miles distant from the large kampong of Anak-Gleh, where the hadji and the tuanku were supposed to be engaged in stirring up their countrymen to hostilities against the Dutch, to dispatch an

Achinese messenger to the chief of that village with a written order summoning him to appear at once before him with the two disturbers. Knowing, however, that in all probability little or no attention would be paid to that order, the colonel took time by the forelock and commanded all the available troops of the nearest forts to march upon Anak-Gleh and capture the disturbers dead or alive. The colonel's supposition proved correct, for the Achinese messenger soon afterward returned to Indrapuri with the information that the inhabitants of Anak-Gleh had been wrought up to a high pitch of warlike enthusiasm by Tuanku Hassan and Hadji Mohammed Said, and that he himself barely escaped being put to death as a spy. When this was reported to the colonel, orders were immediately signalled to Indrapuri to bombard the obstinate village. As soon as the shells of the howitzers caused smoke to arise from the atap roofs, a long line of women and children was seen emerging from the kampong. The fugitives from the Dutch missiles drove their cattle before them and carried their most necessary household articles on their backs. They were wending their way to a place of safety among the dense groves in the foothills extending towards the land of the Pedirese.

The men remaining in the village, which consisted of about fifty houses built in the usual Malay style and accommodating each as many as a dozen families, expected the coming of the Dutch at the loop-holes in the thorny bamboo stockade, the approach to which was guarded by caltrops. The latter consisted of short pieces of pointed bamboo boiled in oil and stuck cross-wise into the ground.

They were hidden from view by the tall grass and proved a great annoyance to the naked feet of the Javanese troops. The stockade, which enclosed an area of nearly thirty acres, was lined on its inner side with lemons, tamarinds and other fruit trees. The separate dwellings were surrounded chiefly by banana patches. The enclosure was encompassed by a trench which carried off the rain water to the near-by neglected rice-swamps. The Achinese never allow their dogs, who set up a howl at the approach of strangers at night, to enter their villages. The latter are also protected by a kind of automatic burglar alarm, consisting of a plank, one end of which rests on the ground, while the other is connected by means of rattan strings with rattles concealed in the tree-tops. The plank is so placed as to hide its purpose from the eyes of an intruder.

In the afternoon the Dutch forces closed in upon Anak-Gleh, which was situated a little east of the road leading from Mandaheling to Indrapuri, from opposite directions in two divisions in skirmishing order. Colonel van der Pool approached the village from Indrapuri on the north with half a battalion of infantry and a section of artillery, while Captain van Houten had orders to draw up his troops in the rear of the village and cut off the retreat of the Achinese. When the colonel's men got within reach of the enemy's fire, he ordered them to seek shelter behind the causeway while the artillery shot a breach from the roadside into the stockade. While the artillery was doing considerable havoc with the light architecture of the village and of the stockade and dense clouds of smoke were issuing from burning roofs, the Achinese kept up a lively fire at their assailants from the north without knowing that Captain van Houten's division was lying in ambush on the other side to cut off their retreat. In the meantime, a lone trooper had found his way, under cover of the smoke from the burning kampong, to Captain van Houten and handed him a message from the colonel, notifying the former that upon a given bugle signal he would take the kampong by storm from the roadside. The message also ordered the captain to take the retreating Achinese under cross-fire. The signal having been given and answered, Colonel van der Pool's men stormed with loud hurrahs into the village. The Achinese turned to fly and were dismayed when they were received by a sudden cross-fire from Captain van der Houten's troops. Hadji Mohammed Said and Tuanku Hassan vainly strove to check the retreat of their men and to rally them behind the stone walls of a missigit. Their favorable opportunity for flight was gone. Surrounded by a bodyguard of four young Achinese warriors, who were intoxicated by opium, they expected the approach of the enemy in the sanctuary. When Lieutenant Verhaalen and his men approached the latter, the quartette of Achinese braves rushed upon them with the fury of despair and for a

few minutes there were some lively passes between bayonets and klewangs until the expert aim of Sharpshooter Saufhaus put an end to the struggle. While this hand to hand struggle was going on, the hadji and the tuanku were crouched in one corner of the missigit. When they saw their bodyguard becoming overpowered by superior numbers, they begged for mercy, shouting "Kassian!" Their prayer was granted, but they were bound hand and foot and conveyed to the district headquarters at Gleh-Kambing.

All the houses which had not been destroyed by fire were razed to the ground after being looted. Many articles of historic interest were found, such as the barrel of a big brass cannon presented to the Achinese by one of the Georges of England, ships' bells, pumps, carpets, books and many other things captured from European vessels and lugged into the interior.

Hadji Mohammed Said and Tuanku Hassan were brought before the controller at Gleh-Kambing, who identified them as very dangerous instigators who, by means of the Koran and opium, sought to inflame the peaceful portion of the Achinese against the government. The controller ordered Sergeant der Weg to convey the prisoners, under cover of a strong military escort, to the governor's headquarters at Kota-Rajah. The sergeant understood the wink given him by his superior and did not execute the order literally. While on the way, he dispatched the prisoners, who were securely fettered, and arrived at Kota-Rajah with their corpses. He explained his action by saying that they had made an attempt to escape.

After the kampong of Anak-Gleh was destroyed and the fruit trees cut down, the soldiers returned to their respective posts. While passing a small village near the wayside, a shot was heard and an old negro, the only full-blooded one in a half company of Africans, fell dead. Quick as a flash, his colored companions dropped their plunder and rushed upon the village with bayonets fixed. The infuriated troops slaughtered indiscriminately all the men, women and children who did not see their approach in time to escape. Captain van Houten ordered his bugler to call them back, but the blacks paid no attention to the signal, but kept on avenging the death of Sambo in the blood of the villagers. Two white companies were then sent after the maddened crowd and finally succeeded, with a liberal use of the butts of their rifles, in prevailing upon their dark-hued comrades to leave the village and resume their place in the line of march.

It was late in the evening, when the troops arrived at their quarters. Although thirsty, hungry, dirty and tired from the fatigues of the march in a broiling sun, they sang and shouted and gave vent to the joy of victory. The contents of the rifled chicken-coops of Anak-Gleh dangled from the belts of the whites. The Amboinese triumphantly brandished on the points of their bay-

onets the petticoats left behind by the Achinese women. The Javanese had stuck their bayonets through rows of delicious durian fruits and filled their pockets with small tin cases containing opium.



While the troops were attacking Anak-Gleh, two Jesuit missionaries, arrayed in the full garb of their order and riding small ponies of Sumatran breed, appeared before Lieutenant van Baker who commanded at Mandaheling during Captain van Houten's absence. They told him that they were making a trip to the Battah country to convert the heathen, and exhibited their passports which allowed them entire freedom in their movements. The lieutenant earnestly entreated them not to venture into the Battah country without a strong guard, otherwise they would run the most imminent risk of furnishing a choice morsel for a cannibal menu. However, their religious zeal overcame all fears for their

own personal safety and with an "Our God will help us," they left the fort, accompanied by two Malay guides with which the lieutenant supplied them.

A few days later, the guides returned, nearly starved to death, with bruises on their hands and feet, and the traces of great hardships and terror impressed on their countenances, which enabled all who saw them hobbling towards the fort to anticipate their story. The lieutenant's warning to the missionaries proved to have been only too well founded. One of the guides related the history of their brief and unfortunate trip as follows:

"We reached the Battah kampong of Lutu in the evening and were apparently well received. The missionaries who had made themselves acquainted with the language of the natives before coming to Sumatra, sought and obtained permission to address them in their meeting house. The Battahs listened with respectful attention, but said nothing. When the missionaries finished their preliminary exposition of the word of God and asked shelter for the night, the savages fell upon them and put them in the stocks, while our hands and feet were tied with rattan ropes. The more cor-

pu lent of the two priests was then tied to a wooden cross and killed and eaten, while his companion was locked up in a shed to be fattened on bananas for a day or two before being served in the same manner. Myself and the other guide succeeded in biting through our rattan fetters with our sharp teeth and making good our escape before daybreak, while our guards, made sleepy by their opulent feast, had relaxed their vigilance. Terror lent us wings, for we, too, would have been eaten had we stayed."

The occurrence was reported to headquarters and orders given to extirpate the cannibals of Lutu. After a month's delay, five battalions of infantry, a squadron of cavalry and two batteries of field artillery were made up from the garrisons of the forts extending from Kota-Rajah to Mandaheling and concentrated in a vast circle, the center of which was formed by the doomed kampong of Lutu. On account of the excited condition of the country, caused by the destruction of Anak-Gleh and the machinations of the hadjis and of Tuanku di Tiru, one of the biggest Achinese chiefs, who had remained quiet for a long time but was now beginning to bestir himself again, it was found expedient to mass a large force around Lutu, to chastise which otherwise a very small body of troops would have been sufficient, as well as to keep the manoeuvres of the troops as secret as possible in order to not give the enemy any warning. Of the five battalions, only one, the Fourteenth, encountered serious difficulties on its march to the scene of the conflict. While cutting across the country from Anak-Galooeng, the battalion was misled by an Achinese guide, who was subsequently shot dead by the major, into a swamp, where many of the men sank up to the armpits into the mire and were fired upon by the Achinese hidden in trenches and behind the bushes on the neighboring hills. After suffering a loss of nearly a hundred dead and wounded, the troops finally got out of the dangerous locality. Four wounded white soldiers had to be left behind, because the chain-boys ordered to bring them out of the fire refused to obey. The chain-boys were instantly shot and the four men left to their doom. The next day the village chief of Sibri, a small kampong near Gleh-Kambing, was sent out to look for the men. He returned, saying, "Suda makan andjing," "The dogs have eaten them."

While the troops were closing in upon Lutu, the Achinese, who had gotten wind of the movements of the Dutch, seized the opportunity to fire upon the forts which had been stripped of part of their men. The report of infantry and artillery fire could be heard in all directions. The hills were alive with Achinese, who appeared from the distance like busy ants, firing random shots towards the forts which answered with incessant volleys re-echoed by the lofty ridge of the Gleh-Rajah. The inhabitants of Lutu were not aware of their danger until the Dutch bayonets glittered in front of the

stockade surrounding their kampong. The gates were open and through them the Second battalion charged. In a few moments the men were inside the enclosure, applied torches to the sides of the houses, which were very long and rested on posts, and began the indiscriminate slaughter of all the inhabitants, old and young, male and female. Fifty men rushed into the house of Pang-Ulu Tibang, who, together with his guest, Pang-Ulu Butu, was made a prisoner and taken outside the kampong. The affrighted Battahs and their wives and children set up a terrific howl of wail, which was mingled with the wild hurrahs and curses of the Christian Amboinese and negroes and with the crackling noise of the flames devouring the domiciles and granaries of the inhabitants. A few of the savages, who were not deprived of their presence of mind by the sudden appearance of a merciless foe in their midst, seized their guns and fired upon the Dutch soldiery, but were quickly brought to the ground by the rapid volleys aimed at them. Those of the villagers who were not transfixed by the bayonet or the sword or riddled with bullets, died in the flames devouring their homes, from which a dense cloud of smoke rose to the spotless azure. After all, human life had been extinguished in the village, and the fruit trees cut down, the cattle of the inhabitants was driven to the nearest military posts. A few charred acres of ground were all that was left of Lutu an hour after the arrival of the Dutch. The missionaries were avenged and the cannibals of that district taught a wholesome lesson. While returning to their posts, the officers made malicious comments on the blessings brought by the missionaries.

The soldiers who had secured the two pang-ulus did not neglect to ransack the house for treasure and took with them the clothes of the missionaries and of Sing Wong, as well as the latter's jewels and money-chest. Sing Wong, it will be remembered, was the unscrupulous storekeeper in the Chinese kampong of Mandaheling, who had been persuaded by his Battah wife to go with her to her old home under the promise that lucrative bargains there awaited him. Her kinsmen, however, with whom a woman is a mere chattel devoid of rights or of voice in momentous matters, paid no attention to her pleadings and feasted on her Chinese husband after securing his wealth.



CHAPTER XV.

BRULLIER'S DESERTION.



THE day following the destruction of Lutu was devoted by the garrison at Mandaheling to rendering the last honors to the dead. An ancient burial ground, which had been used by the Achinese prior to the days of Battah independence, and which occupied a small piece of ground near the fort, was designated by the commanding officer as the last resting place of the men who fell in the two previous days. Among the volunteers selected to dig the graves of their fallen comrades was one Muegge, who, while tossing up the sod with his

spade, came across the skeleton of an Achinese chief. The bones of the latter must have lain mouldering for at least a century, for the klewang buried with the corpse was entirely eaten through by rust. But neither time nor decay had had the slightest effect upon two rows of white and very clear diamonds which studded the hilt of the weapon. Throwing a rapid glance about him and finding his white and colored comrades absorbed in their work, Muegge hastily severed the diamonds from the crumbling hilt with his jack-knife and secured the glittering gems about his person. Later he informed several of his trusty companions of the prize he had found. He carried the latter on his breast in a small leathern bag fastened to his inner clothing.

While the bodies of a hundred fallen soldiers were lying in state under an improvised atap roof between the officers' quarters and the canteen, and their wives, children, comrades and friends filed past to cast a farewell glance at their mortal remains, a touching incident happened. While an officer of the garrison, accompanied by his wife, passed by the body of Hoelscher, a tall, broad-shouldered, fine-looking German trooper with a flowing beard, the njonja trembled when she recognized the features of her clandestine lover, reeled over his teakwood coffin and impressed a passionate kiss on his cold lips. While straightening up, she burst into tears and uttered the wildest lamentations, which she accompanied by burying her soft, small hands into her long, black waving tresses, as though endeavoring to eradicate one of the chief ornaments of her graceful person in honor of her deceased paramour. The by-

standers were paralyzed with surprise for the moment. The officers, however, realized the situation at a glance. Far from betraying the slightest sign of distress at the unexpected revelation of her passion for another, he, on the contrary, gently attempted to console her in the most chivalrous manner.

In the afternoon a solemn procession, headed by Colonel van der Pool and his staff, marched to the music of muffled drums to the open graves displacing the remains of Achinese braves who in more remote days had waged Trojan wars against their Battah neighbors with wavering success. At the cemetery, the pall-bearers deposited their burdens into the various graves, while the latter were surrounded by the soldiers in two rows and the officers took position near the center of the gathering. After brief addresses by Colonel van der Pool, Captain van Houten and the eldest lieutenant, the German chorus sang, "Es ist bestimmt in Gottes Rath," and the post band played Beethoven's Funeral March. The colonel then addressed the Javanese and Amboinese in their own languages, ordered the firing of a farewell salvo by the guard of honor, sandy sod was cast upon the remains of the warriors, and the procession returned to the post to the strains of the lively Boulanger march. The whites, the negroes and the Amboinese were placed into one general grave, while the Javanese were interred separately. The Javanese inter their dead in a peculiar manner. A hole is dug in the ground and the body placed in a lateral excavation. The bamboo of the bier is then broken into small pieces which are planted just outside the excavation so that the falling sods may not strike the body when the grave is filled. The Javanese women, while following the bier of their husbands, carry in their hands a small vase on a salver. The vase is filled with incense and from the salver they take copper pence steeped in rice flour and strew them along the wayside. They believe that the observance of this ceremony will insure them good luck in the future. The natives will not pick up pence while the marks of the rice flour are upon them.

The faithful Ponki, the ancient Javanese housekeeper of Esshuis, not only religiously observed all the ceremonies of her nation in the obsequies of her white lord, but even sought to assure herself of the good graces of his departed spirit by planting a large bottle full of gin on his grave. Ponki, being a Mohammedan, believed that Esshuis would display in paradise the same thirsty proclivities for which he was distinguished while on earth.

The weeks following the funeral were rather uneventful and enlivened only by the ripple of commotion caused by the escape of Quartermaster-Sergeant Brullier from the guard-house and his desertion to the Achinese. The food served the white soldiers was frequently very poor, not only because the white cook and his Javanese assistants were extremely careless, but also because the Chinese army contractor supplied the post with a very inferior quality of

provisions, in order to indemnify himself for the cigars, wines and other articles of luxury, which he found it to his interest to furnish to the principal officers free of charge in order to assure himself of a continuance of his contracts. If it had not been for the Javanese women, who managed to furnish their masters with substitutes for the deficiencies of the mess with the meagre pay of the soldiers, these would frequently have had the choice of either going hungry or swallowing distasteful nourishment. It was unsafe for the men to wait upon their superiors with complaints, for they ran the imminent risk of being punished for "unfounded complaining," or of being placed upon the blacklist by a red line being run diagonally across the report of their conduct.

One morning a lieutenant who acted as officer of the day handed the cook his key for the storeroom and ordered him to open it for inspection. He found a ham missing and threatened to report the cook whom he accused of the theft. The cook waited until the lieutenant was gone and then related the affair to Brullier who sent Saufhaus on an errand to the officers' quarters. Saufhaus found the officers feasting on the ham which had been secretly taken from the storeroom and mentioned the fact to Brullier, who immediately reported the case to the captain. The latter, however, declared the testimony of the honest Swiss insufficient to overcome the denial of the officers and sentenced Brullier to fourteen days' imprisonment in the guard-house. The Austrian was deeply incensed at his unjust treatment and resolved to desert and employ his military skill (he had been an officer in Europe) on the side of the Achinese and against the Dutch. One night he managed to dig a hole in the sandy soil under the plank wall of the guard-house and scale the stockade without being observed by the sentinel on guard, a Javanese, who was gazing half asleep at the dark foliage overhanging the silvery stream. His high boots protected him from the sharp points of the barbed wire enclosure. He had already gained the other side of the small open space about the fort, when the rustling of the alang-alang, through which he hastened his steps, attracted the sentinel's attention. The latter fired his gun in the direction in which he saw a dark shadow disappear, the entire guard was alarmed and fired a series of volleys into the rembu, but without effect. Brullier made good his escape and his comrades mourned the loss of a genial and open-handed friend.

A year after this occurrence, a tall, gaunt figure, with blanched and sunken cheeks and eyes seeming to start from their sockets, was tugging away like an infuriated tiger at the iron bars of a prisoner's cell in the hospital at Kota-Rajah and muttering curses against the Dutch and their officers and his evil star that led him to enlist for the East Indies. His breast heaved with the fury boiling within him and with the pains caused by diseases contracted during his wanderings preceding his capture. It was Brul-

lier. Before his cell his former comrade in arms Schmidt paced to and fro with measured steps, forbidden by the stern military rules even to exchange a word of consolation with his friend. The sun sank behind the mountains and night fell over the land without the intervention of twilight. Schmidt had been anxiously waiting for the moment when the corporal of the watch went to supper. Resting the butt end of his gun on his foot and placing his ears against the bars of Brullier's cell, the latter told him the story of his adventures since his desertion from Mandaheling and the fate that was in store for him.

"When I reached the quarters of an Achinese band," Brullier narrated, "I was brought before Tuanku di Tiru, who cross-questioned me for some time on the strength of the various posts, their garrisons and other matters of interest to him. On the start, I was locked up, but otherwise treated very well. Later, my hair and beard were shorn off and the ceremony of circumcision performed on me. I was then declared to be one of them. I soon gained their full confidence by mounting an old gun upon a carriage and instructing them in making shells out of the old tin cans thrown away by the Dutch, after having consumed the contents. There was a score of deserters from the Dutch ranks among the Achinese. Among them was a Jew by the name of Cohen who had lived among the Achinese since 1879. Sergeant Kolpatz, who was hung by the Dutch for desertion, was not a deserter at all, but a prisoner of war.

"I will never forget the sad fate of a white woman, the wife of a sea captain commanding a British sailing vessel which lay at anchor before Rigas for the purpose of taking aboard a cargo of black pepper. She told me that after the ship had been loaded, the cruel and daring pirate Tuanku Omar came aboard the vessel with twenty men armed to the teeth for the purpose of getting his pay for the pepper. Her husband, Captain Hansen, invited the Achinese to his cabin to settle his accounts with them. They had hardly closed the door behind them, when she, who was in an adjoining cabin, heard a terrible tumult. Entering her husband's cabin, she found the captain and the mate swimming in their blood. Fainting away, she did not recover consciousness until she found herself on an Achinese prauw moored alongside of her husband's vessel. After looting the ship, the defenseless crew of which could offer little resistance, the pirates made for the shore and compelled the woman, who was ill with fever, to follow them barefooted over rough roads into their mountain retreats. Upon the pirates' suggestion, she wrote pitiful letters to the Dutch government, begging the latter to release her from captivity. After vainly seeking to capture Tuanku Omar's kampong, which is situated on a mountain ledge surrounded by swamps about a day's march from Samalanga, the Dutcli, after incurring a loss of several

hundred dead and wounded, were compelled to retreat and accept Tuanku Omar's terms in order to avoid difficulties with John Bull. Upon the payment of a war indemnity and of a ransom of \$100,000 for the woman, she was turned over to the Dutch authorities at Fort Lamptiamu. She was a sorry sight, for which the outrages she had been subjected to at the hands of the white deserters in the Achinese ranks rather than the doings of the natives were responsible.

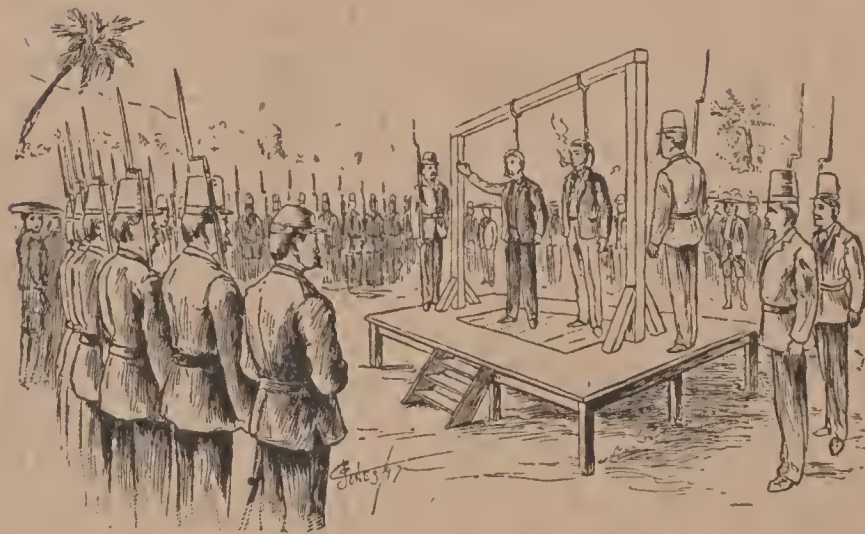
"By the way," Brullier stopped to ask Schmidt, "what became of the woman after she was turned over to the Dutch?"

"I saw her pass through Kota-Rajah in a carriage," Schmidt replied in a scarcely audible whisper, "a few days ago. She was barefooted, wore Achinese clothing and appeared extremely worn out and feeble. The general supplied her with everything befitting her station, showed her all possible attention and placed her on board of a steamer bound for Europe. However, she died soon after the vessel cleared the port of Oleh-Leh."

"I cannot accuse the Achinese of having treated me shabbily," Brullier continued. "They generously acknowledged my services as a skilled engineer, to which the many holes my shells made in your forts will testify, and rewarded me liberally as far as money is concerned. Yet I soon got utterly disgusted with them on account of their crude methods of warfare, their utter lack of a sanitary corps, their disharmony among themselves, and my compulsory attendance at their missigits at the muezzin's call. The Jew Cohen and myself were plentifully supplied with funds and one day we conceived the plan of eluding the vigilance of the Achinese and escaping over the Straits of Malacca to Singapore, from which port we would have found no difficulty in returning to civilization. Accordingly, we disguised ourselves as hadjis and got as far as the port of Edi, where we embarked on a Dutch coasting vessel bound for Singapore, not, however, without having been previously recognized by an Achinese hadji. For the sake of the thousand guilders placed upon my head by the government, this fellow turned informer and set a Dutch cruiser in pursuit of the craft. You know the rest. My brother and our consul did all within their power to save me out of the clutches of the court martial, but in vain. I am sorry now that I attempted to quit the Achinese, for if I had stayed with them and succeeded in securing some artillery, the Dutch flag might soon have ceased to float from some of their palm-log forts along the Gleh-Rajah. But fate willed it otherwise. First, the hadjis cut my pretty Si-Wardi's throat, because she loved me, and soon the hangman will condense mine, because a scapegrace lieutenant stole a ham from the larder at Mandaheling. Adieu. Your two hours' guard duty will soon be over. Do not worry about me. All will soon be over."

By a strange coincidence, Brullier and Juro di Kromo, the Amboi-

nese, who had run amuck at Padang-Pandjang and had been overpowered by the former before doing greater execution, were hung at Kota-Rajah on the same gallows on the same day. The Austrian waved his handkerchief while mounting the stairs leading to the fatal platform, while Juro di Kromo smoked a cigar with true Oriental fatalistic composure.



CHAPTER XVI.

TUANKU ABU'S LAST CHARGE.



SOLDIER'S life at a Sumatran post was not devoid of hardships even when no fighting was going on. During the intervals in which the natives remain quiet, the Dutch soldiery was employed in cutting down the forests lining the military roads leading from fort to fort, in order to deprive the Achinese of the sheltering ambush of leaves and trees. The clearing of the land, which is regarded with great disgust by the Achinese, is supposed to have caused, by the greater scope given to the exhalation of noxious mi-

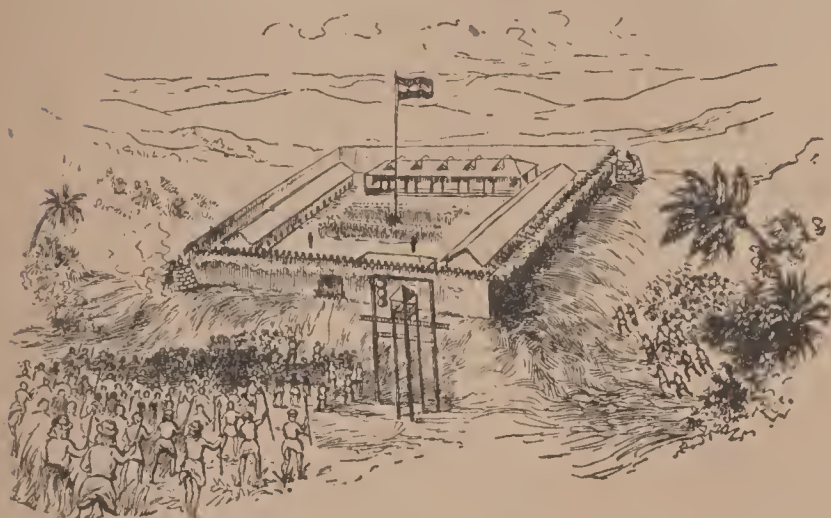
asma arising from decaying vegetation, the appearance of the dreaded berri-berri, a disease which attacks natives and foreigners alike. Two forms of this disease are distinguished. The berri-berri bassa, or wet berri-berri, resembles dropsy. The berri-berri kring, or dry berri-berri, causes the patient to emaciate and die of heart failure.

An attack by the Achinese was hailed almost with joy by the soldiers as a welcome interruption of their wearisome labors in a murderous climate. The younger soldiers grumbled at their ceaseless struggles with the red ants which infest the foliage and creep upon them when the trees are felled. The bites of these ants produce small red spots on the skin and cause a torturing pain. The older soldiers were discontented when no shooting was going on, because they then had no opportunity of returning to the government the empty copper cartridges for which they received a pittance sufficient for an extra gin.

The destruction of Anak-Gleh and of Lutu, which occurred about the middle of the year 1884, was followed by a season of comparative peace in the vicinity of Mandaheling. During this period, Tuanku Abu, one of the most intrepid of the Achinese leaders, recruited among the Pedirese, the darkest-hued, strongest, bravest and fiercest of all the Achinese tribes, a devoted and fanatical band of chosen followers whom the hadjis had inculcated with the belief that on a certain day the powder of the Dutch at Mandaheling would be wet. By catering to their superstitions and by liberal donations of opium, Tuanku Abu had worked up his fol-

lowers into a kind of frenzy in which anything appeared possible to them. An inkling of what was brewing in his camp was conveyed to the Dutch by the daring raid made by eight Achinese, intoxicated with opium, early one morning shortly before Christmas in the year 1885.

While the reveille was being sounded at five o'clock and the corporal of the guard was unlocking the gate of the Javanese camp to let in the chain-boys to sweep out the barracks, eight Achinese,



men of Herculean frame, suddenly leaped upon him in the darkness and dispatched him with their lances and klewangs. During the night they had managed to creep up unseen to the fort and keep in hiding in the barbed wire enclosure, patiently waiting for the moment when the gate would be opened and they could

rush upon and mow down a portion of the unsuspecting garrison. The corporal died without being able to utter a warning sound, but a bugler on guard, who saw the savages rush through the gate, quickly seized his instrument and blew an alarm. The Achinese in the meantime did not waste a moment, but leaped with a bound into the Javanese barracks to the left of the gate. The barrack was occupied by about two hundred men, women and children, who had just been awakened by the reveille and were rubbing the sleep out of their eyes. The eight intruders killed every man, woman and child that got within reach of their klewangs which they handled with lightning-like rapidity. The affrighted inmates of the barrack, who succeeded in eluding the blows of the furious Achinese, made for the open and shouted at the top of their voices: "Orang Atjeh massok!" "The Achinese have broken in!" The alarm sounded by the bugler and the cries of help issuing from the Javanese barrack put the entire garrison on their feet in a few moments. Soon squads of soldiers with fixed bayonets entered the scene of the execution from both sides and fell upon the Achinese madmen. It was a critical moment, for if any of the soldiers had fired at the Achinese, they would have run the greatest risk of hitting their own comrades. For some minutes the barrack resounded with the clashing of klewang, lance and bayonet. The Achinese, driven to bay, defended themselves with desperate valor and great skill in one corner, but were rapidly laid low by the superior numbers of the Dutch, of whom a score perished in the struggle.

The commander of the fort surmised that the amuck of the eight Achinese was the precursor of an assault on a larger scale. To prevent the repetition of an unpleasant surprise, white soldiers were exclusively placed on guard duty and instructed to keep a sharp lookout. Nothing to create suspicion, however, was observed for several days until one bright morning, shortly after the sun had risen over the foot-hills to the east, a sentry on the northeast bastion saw a large troop of howling Achinese approaching towards the fort from a clearing in the neighborhood. The sound of the sentry's gong immediately called to the spot the officers who gazed at the foe through their field glasses and ordered their men to get ready for action.

The Achinese advanced rather slowly until they emerged into the smooth road connecting Mandaheling with Simpanoli, when they started upon a pell-mell assault upon the fort. With their thundering war-whoop "Huh Allah! Huh Allah!" and brandishing scaling ladders and wreaths of combustible material steeped in tar, some five hundred opium-inspired Achinese braves rushed towards the stockade, through the loopholes in which several hundred Dutch bayonets glared threateningly upon the rash assaulters. Captain van Houten had given strict orders to his men not to fire until ordered to do so. The men obeyed even when the burning pitch wreaths hurled by the strong arms of the sinewy natives began to fly over their heads and ignite the light atap roofs of their quarters. The captain saw the fingers of his men pressing nervously against the triggers of their rifles and continued to shout: "Don't shoot! Wait until they get within fifty paces!" Tuanku Abu himself, armed with a lance and a klewang, and dressed in white, the color of the garbs worn by the so-called orang brani, or champions, who are pledged to lead the van, rushed on at the head of his men, who were encouraged by the mock clicking of the Dutch guns in their belief in what the hadjis had told them would happen on that day, namely, that the powder of the Dutch would be wet and that then the latter would become easy victims to Achinese dexterity with lance and klewang. When the front line of the dark-hued warriors had advanced to within fifty paces of the fort, Captain van Houten thundered out, "Fire!" Above the infantry fire from three hundred rifles was heard the thunder of the howitzers which aimed their metal hail into the midst of the daring foe. When the cloud of smoke from the first volley disappeared, Tuanku Abu and scores of his followers were seen writhing in the dust. The others, however, pressed on with unabated vigor to the very gates of the fort, against which they attempted to place their scaling ladders. Even where an Achinese had succeeded in mounting to the top of the stockade, he was quickly transfixed or shot by the soldiers placed on the sentry platform running along the inner side of the en-

closure. The defenders fired volley after volley into the ranks of the assaulters, which were rapidly thinned, thus demonstrating to the befuddled minds of the savages the futility of their undertaking. After a very short time the Achinese started to fly. The green-turbaned hadjis, who led the attack, were the first to attempt to make good their retreat, but were brought to the ground by the unerring aim of Saufhaus and other sharpshooters.

The result of the brief engagement was a veritable carnage among the followers of Tuanku Abu, while the Dutch troops remained entirely unharmed. A few parting shots were sent after the flying remnants of the Achinese, after which the Dutch proceeded to cart away the corpses—there were no wounded and no prisoners, because no quarter was given or asked—and bury them in a large pit filled with quicklime. In the afternoon an Achinese woman appeared with a flag of truce and asked for the delivery of the dead. This request was not granted. The following morning, however, the Achinese mass grave was adorned by scores of little white cotton flags stuck into the ground.

The abortive and suicidal attempt of Tuanku Abu and his followers upon Mandaheling was the last conflict of any magnitude in the ceaseless guerilla warfare carried on between the Dutch and the Achinese to the present day.

Every now and then a brief dispatch from Hong Kong announces some outrage perpetrated by Achinese pirates upon the defenseless crew of some vessel. At longer intervals of time, a still briefer dispatch from Batavia reports that the Dutch colonial troops made a successful attack upon some Achinese village. The warfare carried on by the Dutch against the natives may be compared to some extent to the Indian wars in American history, and will be terminated by the same great civilizing agency—the railroads.

The members of the transport which left Batavia with the Soorakarta in April, 1884, were frequently transferred from one fort to the other in Northern Sumatra. Out of a company of seventy-five Germans who enlisted at Harderweyk, only fourteen lived to return to their native land or to the shore of an adopted country at the close of their term of six years' service. The great majority were either killed in the frequent skirmishes or succumbed to the diseases of that deadly climate. The survivors of that company, who almost without exception seized the first opportunity to hasten to more salubrious shores, carried with them the conviction that they had seen the tropics in all their glory, directly under the equator, in the vicinity of lofty mountain ranges and of one of the most beautiful of inland lakes, and in daily intercourse with a pirate and a cannibal nation. Their hardships were many and their delights few. Whether enthusiast or adventurer, the only consolation of a mercenary under the Dutch flag in the East Indies

is the love of his Javanese mate and housekeeper—the magnet of attraction for Europeans in those regions.

The history of Saridin, a native soldier, who rose to the rank of a lieutenant, may, perhaps, form the most fitting conclusion of these Reminiscences of Sumatra.



CHAPTER XVII.

SARIDIN, A JAVANESE LIEUTENANT.

1. A SON OF THE DESSA.



SERGEANT Saridin's comrades in the Dutch colonial army regarded him as an ideal subaltern officer. The mere mention of his name was sufficient to silence the most persistent detractor of the native soldiery and refute the assertion that the Javanese were wholly unfit for warlike pursuits.

"Yes, Saridin is an exception," was a remark frequently heard in the barracks of Java and Sumatra. But Saridin was not merely an exception: he was a model. His carriage, his deportment, his manners, exerted a powerful influence on the

native soldiers under his command, and their deeds reflected to some degree the genius of their leader.

Although Saridin was rather short of stature, his faultless military bearing made him appear taller than he really was. Even when off duty, he invariably walked with head erect, and observed the utmost precision in all his movements. His long jet black hair betrayed the daily application of fresh kalapa oil, and even his unpretentious moustache exhibited evidences of careful grooming. His apparel was very simple, but neat, and included shoes, although this requisite of civilized man was never allowed the Javanese natives except by special permission from the Colonial government. His gait alone revealed to an attentive observer a tinge of awkwardness, because the well-shaped feet of the Javanese protest against encasement of any description. He possessed the talent of lending military air to the performance of the simplest duties. When approaching the officer of the day, he would bring his resolute gait to an abrupt stop when the regulation interval of three paces had been reached, touch his cap with his right hand and make the customary report "as pesen," "all is well," with the mien of a man communicating state secrets of the highest importance.

Otherwise, Saridin was looked upon merely as a native soldier unworthy of further notice, although many a young officer involuntarily lowered his eyes before the penetrating glance of the brown sergeant. And yet scarcely ten rain monsoons had swept across the

ever green, spice-laden jungles and the extinct volcanoes of the Pearl of the East Indies since he was a child riding naked from his native village to the adjoining dessa (rice-field) on the back of his favorite steer that joined his fellow-toilers in a delicious and cooling mud-bath in the irrigating streams descending from the neighboring hills and mountains. Great, indeed, was the gulf between the boy, who lived almost like his steer, and Sergeant Saridin.

When Saridin had arrived at the age of fifteen years, he was compelled, at the request of traveling Europeans, generally Dutch soldiers, upon the village chief for carriers of their luggage between stations on the highway leading from Samarang on the northern coast of the island to Ambarawa in the interior, to perform a porter's work for the modest remuneration of two duits (equivalent to about one cent) for each mile made with a load. No allowance was made for return trips without a load.

On his first trips to Ambarawa the insufficient pay was a matter of little consequence to him. He forgot his most pressing needs in gazing with mute amazement at the many strange sights crowding upon him during his compulsory journeys—the first aspect of Occidental civilization and its accessories, stone houses built close to each other, Europeans walking about like ordinary inhabitants of the dessa, without a following and without the pajong (umbrella, badge of distinction), and stores filled with a bewildering array of objects, the uses of which were a mystery to him. In whatever direction he turned his head, his eyes fell upon spacious and tempting warongs (eating houses) and his imagination would soar from its oriental stupor to alluring phantasies of prandial delights. In such predicaments, the ill-paid and half-fed youth did the wisest thing under the circumstances: tighten the belt around his waist and accept an invitation to a frugal repast from a comrade who still had a few duits to spare.

After repeated visits to seats of European culture, habit dulled his senses to their charms, and he frequently had occasion to meditate on the constant void in his exchequer. He realized the fact that he was virtually becoming poorer every day he transported freight on his back at the current rates of pay.

One day a tuwan, or gentleman, gave him, to his great astonishment, a handful of duits for merely removing some parcels from one side of a street to the other. Saridin had previously pawned his last sound sarong for fifty duits to the hostess of a warong and sought to acquire the twenty duits still lacking him for the redemption of the garment by fortunate throws at dice, but luck went against him and he lost not only all his coin, but alas his badjoo, upper garment.

Hungry, disgusted and fatigued, Saridin sought the shade of a waringi tree near a warong in the immediate vicinity of the barracks of Samarang. The fragments of an old sarong constituted his

entire habiliment, almost too scant for even that unconventional clime. The only other chattel he owned, his pickolan, carrying stick, lay beside him. After a brief rest, he was forced to relinquish the shaded bench to make room for some soldiers who had come along. The burning sun of the tropics blazed down upon him with unmitigated intensity and the only shaded spot in sight was the roofed veranda of the warong.

Saridin was sick from hunger and extremely miserable. Almost within reach of his arm, the soldiers were enjoying a splendid repast of sayjor (rice and cream), pisang gorang (fried bananas) and many varieties of sweet and aromatic fruits.

He lingered near the soldiers and his thoughts occasionally flew back to his native dessa. He thought of his ancestral bamboo hut



resting on posts, of the surrounding palm, tamarind and waringi groves, of his favorite steer and especially of his beloved Sarina, a daughter of the village chief, who had been his playmate when a child and whom he expected to take under his own roof as soon as he could call one his own.

While Saridin's mind was rumbling between the dessa and the festive board, a pisang leaf, which had served one of the soldiers as a plate, fell to the ground. A few grains of rice still clung to the leaf, and Saridin could not resist the temptation of picking it up and greedily devouring the sparse vestiges of a feast.

"Key andjin," "Like a dog!" said one of the men, with an accent of profound contempt.

"Lapar!" "I am hungry!" was Saridin's humble apology.

"Hungry and no money! Then why do you not become a soldier?" was the rejoinder of one of the men.

The prospect of a military career had never entered Saridin's mind when he was musing on the wretchedness of his condition. Like most of his countrymen he bestowed very little thought upon the future. It is true, occasional reflexion had taught him that it was more delightful to saunter about beneath a gilded umbrella and ride a spirited steed and have a sufficiency of rice at every meal than to be compelled to carry burdens for the orang blandas, as the natives of the Malay archipelago call their white masters. But the thought of attempting to improve or change his condition had never entered his mind.

"Are the soldiers ever forced to carry burdens?" he asked in a timid manner.

"No, never."

"Never!" he reiterated, as if doubting either the testimony of his ears or the veracity of the men.

"Never, and yet they always receive plenty of rice and money. Who furnishes them with all these things?" he questioned further.

"The government," was the laconic reply of the blue-coats.

"And what services must the soldiers perform in return?"

"Guard duty, drilling and fighting the enemy. It is an honor to be a soldier," the men informed him, not without an exhibition of pride in their calling and their superiority over the untutored lad from the *desa*.

Saridin stared at the ground and pondered. He knew that as soon as he enlisted in the Dutch army, his black hair, which was gathered up in a queue, would be cut off, and began to doubt whether Sarina would continue to lavish her affections upon him after the camp barber's scissors had done their work, and relieved him of what every true Javanese takes great pride in—his long hair.

The tight embrace of his belt gradually ceased to suppress the rebellious murmurings of his stomach, and the sight of the soldiers munching the delicious aromatic *darian* fruit finally overcame his lethargy.

The soldiers saw his waning resistance to a change in his avocation and one of them told him:

"If you wish to become a soldier, you can eat as much rice as you please at my expense and pay me back when you receive your bounty. From what *desa* do you hail?"

"From *Dessa Klumpang*."

"How old are you?"

"The cocoanut palm which my father planted in front of our hut at my birth has borne fruit for the last twelve monsoons," Saridin informed the voluntary recruiting officer who now became anxious to enlist him on account of the twelve guilders "blood money" which he was entitled to in case of success. The lad had

told him in his poetic vernacular that he was of military age, and there being no flaw apparent in his make-up, the men felt sure of their prize.

"What is your name?" was the final question put to him.

"Saridin."

"Now, then, Saridin, sit down and eat. When you have had your fill, we will take you with us to the sergeant-major."

During this conversation Saridin sat squatted on the ground Javanese fashion, that is balancing the body on the toes with the lower extremities describing a zigzag. The invitation to dine on rice and other delicacies overcame whatever repugnance to a military career may still have lain dormant within him. He arose, took a seat on the bench occupied by the men and pitched into the eatables with the voracity of a starved out dessa dog. The cravings of hunger satisfied, he followed the soldiers to the barracks.

2. AMONG THE MERCENARIES.

Saridin entertained but very vague ideas of the meaning of the various ceremonies of which he was the central figure, preceding his enrollment into a company of native infantry. He was led from one officer to the other and none allowed him to squat on the floor, as is the custom of the natives in civic life when addressing a superior. The first officer he was presented to placed him against a post and appeared to be satisfied with his height. Another subjected him to a thorough physical examination, as though he was an animal on sale. A third wrote a few lines which were handed his conductor.

At night Saridin was given a good supper and assigned a mat on which to sleep. Twice the drumbeat interrupted his slumbers which the reveille put an end to altogether for the first day of his new course of life.

In the morning the young recruit was taken before the resident who asked him the name of his dessa. The balance of the day he was employed in working about the house of the sergeant-major and enjoyed the unaccustomed plenty of dried meat and cream.

The resident's certificate, authorizing Saridin's enrollment, was received the following day by the sergeant-major who at once ordered a native sergeant to appear before him with the new recruit. The sergeant-major then read in Dutch the articles of war to the sergeant who translated them into Javanese for the benefit of Saridin. After every sentence the sergeant asked the prospective defender of the Dutch prestige in the Malay archipelago "Mengarti?" "Did you understand?"

"Ingeh," "Yes," was Saridin's invariable reply, although, in truth, he comprehended very little of what was read to him except a confusing gibberish about shooting, hanging and dishonorable discharge (key bangs at jang trada hormatnja), for the noise of the

soldiers drilling on the grounds and the incessant beating of drums made an understanding of what was said very difficult.

At last the sergeant-major handed Saridin a pen and told him to sign his name to a document. When Saridin informed him that he could not write, the officer modified his order and suggested that he draw chicken feet (*kaki-ajam*) by way of making his mark in place of his signature. Saridin, who understood still less, if possible, of drawing than he did of writing, looked with perplexity upon the hand which was expected to imprint a similitude of the pedal extremities of a chancleer on paper, until the native sergeant grew impatient, laid his hand upon Saridin's and told him to hold fast to the pen. In a moment the bottom of the sheet was covered with a series of irregular ellipses unthought of by Euclid, and Saridin became a full-fledged soldier. The sergeant hastily resumed his arms and rejoined his comrades at drill.

Another *tuwan*, the *fourir*, then took charge of Saridin and led him to the magazine to receive his accoutrements. Saridin was there fitted out with an abundance of clothing such as he had never even dreamed of possessing and the necessity of which he could not understand. After carrying to his bunk a supply of trousers, shirts, caps, sarongs, neckcloths, copper buttons, and other things, a native comrade assisted him in arraying him in his new clothes, after first cutting off the beautiful long hair of which Saridin was very proud. An hour later Saridin was completely equipped for his new role and jingled fifteen guilders bounty in his pocket.

The vast island empire of the Dutch in the East Indies embraces Java, Sumatra, Celebes, a portion of Borneo, the Moluccas and a number of smaller islands, which are inhabited by representatives of nearly all Malay tribes. The Dutch Colonial army, which is scattered in small detachments over all portions of the Malay archipelago, is composed principally of Javanese and Amboinese, the white soldiery, which is drawn from nearly all countries of the world, forming about one-third of it. From among the Malays proper of Menang-Kebo on Sumatra only a few companies are levied, as this people enjoys a fair degree of wealth and is therefore not so easily induced to adopt the military profession.

The principal recruiting stations on Java are Batavia, Meester Cornelis, Buitenzorg, Samarang, Soorabaya and Willem I.; and on Sumatra, Fort de Kock and Padang-Pandjang. Chartered steamers are at all times ready to convey troops and munitions to and from all parts of the empire.

Saridin's company was one of the many assigned for duty to Northern Sumatra. In the ceaseless skirmishes with the crafty natives, men of large and powerful frames, thoroughly conversant with the territory and adepts in all the arts of guerrilla warfare, Saridin soon found opportunities to distinguish himself by superior dexterity and valor, and rose by degrees to the rank of sergeant. On

one occasion, he left his captain behind him in scaling a breastwork, and on another he shot down a foe who had leveled his kris at his commanding officer. These deeds earned for him the bronze medal for courage and fidelity.

At another time the command of a post was temporarily given to a European non-commissioned officer of Saridin's company. A band of hostile natives unexpectedly appeared on the scene, surrounded the post and cut off all its means of communication with the outside world. The garrison, consisting of twenty-five men, repulsed several assaults, but their commander fell, seven men were disabled and Saridin limped with a bullet wound in his leg. This did not, however, deter him, who was next in command, from assuming charge of the defense and issuing his orders with laconic brevity as though nothing had happened.

The enemy, not desiring to take their chances on a third assault, contented themselves with beleaguering the fort and attempting to starve the garrison, whose rations, in consequence, were gradually reduced until they amounted to nothing.

Saridin suppressed the discontented murmurs of his men by threatening with instant death anyone who spoke of surrender, and he was known to keep his word. A soldier who attempted to desert was discovered by Saridin and instantly dispatched. After several days and nights fraught with the greatest hardships caused by total lack of food and constant annoyance by the enemy, Saridin announced to his men that an hour before sunrise on the following day they should cut their way in close order through the scattered lines of the savages and make for a neighboring post, while he would remain at the post with the sick and wounded and expect the foe in the powder magazine with a torch in his hand. The men, however, refused to abandon their disabled comrades and their gallant leader behind them and seek doubtful safety in flight, and voluntarily promised to hold out another day. Before they were driven to the last extreme, a detachment of troops came to their rescue, routed the savages and raised the siege.

Saridin received the silver medal for bravery and a sword of honor from the governor-general, his name was mentioned with praise in the orders of the day and his conduct applauded.

Yet were his rise in stations and the distinctions bestowed upon him adequate to his merits and sufficient to satisfy his ambition? Did they increase his zeal to serve a government which considered a few empty honors and his modest pay sufficient reward for his services? Only Sarina, his wife, knew of his incipient discontent.

3. SARINA.

In accordance with the custom requiring every decent Javanese to take unto himself a wife, Saridin had, when still a mere private, chosen the playmate of his boyhood, Sarina, to share his camp life.

Her complexion was a shade lighter than his own,—among the coffee-hued natives great stress is laid on the faintest approximation to a Caucasian tint—her dark brown, lustrous eyes had an intelligent look and harmonized with her long and coarse jet black hair. As the wives of the native soldiers share the quarters of their liege lords in the barracks and frequently do considerable execution among themselves with their tongues while their stronger halves are pursuing the natives of Acheen into the recesses of the Gleh-Rajah, Saridin made it a point to instil Sarina with his own keen love of order. Whenever he returned from drill or guard duty, he could shake off fatigue at leisure with a cool bath in an adjoining stream and seek repose on his couch with the full assurance that upon awakening after an hour's lapse, his arms and accoutrements would lay beside him, properly arranged and able to bear the closest scrutiny. In the earlier part of their joint career, Sarina earned at least the rations of a soldier by washing the garments of the European subaltern officers of the company and by the baking of kwe-kwe, a kind of sweet pastry which is much relished by the natives.

Saridin's promotion gave her the title of Nhahi Serriant—Mrs. Sergeant—and her husband insisted upon her letting other women do the cooking and baking for her and upon confining herself to the labors of superintendence.

Saridin's influence with the members of his company enhanced that of Sarina with the feminine contingent of the camp. She settled to their satisfaction all the little disputes constantly arising among the dusky ladies of the garrison. In serious affairs, where jealousy or infidelity was the leading passion, Saridin was generally called to arbitrate, and it rarely occurred that his decision was not accepted as final and the officer of the day appealed to.

Whenever the company was in the field, Sarina was intrusted with the charge of the quarters, peopled in such events solely by women and children, to the great disgust of the sergeant-major's wife. The latter's remonstrations to the commander, however, were in vain, because her conduct was not considered a standard even in that easy going community. Every morning Sarina would then inspect the quarters with the serious air of a general. Whenever the adjutant announced his arrival, it was a pleasure to enter the well-kept apartments. Sarina, neatly dressed, would receive the officer at the door with a broom as a badge of her dignity in her hands and salute him with a respectful "as pesen"—all is well—and then cry out in a loud voice "Odeh!" "To order!" On such occasions Sarina's realm presented a festive but odd appearance, for no matter how fiercely the morning sun glared through the open windows, a burning lamp graced every table. The native women stood each at her proper couch, anxious lest curiosity tempt their children to poke their brown, close-shaven heads through the

curtains surrounding the couches and mar the solemnity of the ceremony.

4. BROWN AND BLACK.

Saridin was no longer a coolie, a mere human beast of burden. He had learned to think, to observe and to compare, and the rudiments of knowledge acquired in the service further stimulated his inquiries. He had meditated for a long time on the distinctions made in the treatment of European and Asiatic soldiers and had almost contented himself with the conclusion that the difference in color alone was responsible for the better pay and more bountiful rations accorded his white comrades.

It could not be denied, he admitted, that the Javanese were a stupid and foolish people in comparison with the Europeans, but his countrymen would not remain so forever, and many old native soldiers performed their duties even better than their white brethren. The natives received smaller rations than the whites. Why? Was it because the Javanese coolie was too poorly paid to eat meat daily? Was it because all European soldiers were accustomed to good fare prior to their enlistment? The Javanese, too, were fond of meat which made their bodies stronger and more impervious to hardships. But why did the whites receive better pay than the natives? Did not both serve the same king and the same country? Did not both wear the same cockade and the same uniform? Was the punishment in store for delinquents not alike? Ought the reward, too, then, not be commensurate with the punishment? Were the Javanese less exposed to the enemy's fire? Did not lances and klewangs pierce brown skin as readily as white? Why was the King William decoration presented to Sergeant Viermann, who had distinguished himself less than he, and not to him? Did he, Saridin, get drunk twice a week, beat his wife, or ever suffer chastisement at the hands of the provost-marshal? And yet, when Viermann passed the watch, every man rose and saluted and arms were presented as before an officer. But nobody was obliged to do honor to Saridin, although he wore the silver medal for courage and fidelity on his breast and the klewang of honor at his side. Why this discrimination? Such were the thoughts which sowed the seeds of discontent in his heart and intensified the feeling of stifled ambition and undeserved neglect.

If Saridin had known the widely diverging sentiments and opinions of his Dutch masters concerning the treatment that ought to be given their brown-skinned subjects in the East Indies, he would have borne his fate with resignation, if not with satisfaction.

In the far away Holland the voice of compassion and humanity spoke in no uncertain tones through isolated prophets who were

intimately acquainted with the colonies and demonstrated the capacity of the Javanese to rise to a higher plane of civilization if they were given an opportunity for free development.

They denounced the laws degrading a great nation to mere beasts of burden and robbing them systematically of the fruits of their toil. They pointed out the injurious effects of semi-slavery upon the character and progress of the natives of Java after they had become accustomed to regular work, and predicted that continued oppression would bear bitter fruits in the end. They argued that the time had come to make a nobler use of the power obtained by the conquest of a peaceful people, and prophesied that the Javanese, once raised from the dust, would be their natural allies and contribute more to Holland's greatness in a condition of freedom than of subjection.

Saridin knew nothing of all this. As a coolie he had felt the yoke; as a soldier, he experienced the unjust discrimination of the conquerer. Occasionally the love of liberty for himself and his country kindled in him thoughts of rebellion against the rule of unsympathetic foreigners. If another Dipo Negoro should arise, he thought . . . But no, Saridin was too loyal for this. Had he not with his own hand, at the expiration of his first term of service, signed his name in Dutch to the promise to serve the government for another period? Come what might, under no circumstances would he turn traitor.

After a successful expedition against a Sumatran tribe, Saridin's battalion was stationed at Kedong-Kebo, where it was joined by a battery of artillery and another battalion of infantry, one company of which consisted of negroes and half-breeds. The encampment presented a motley array of races and tribes, each of whom spoke a language of their own. The barracks of the Europeans stood next to that of the natives from the Island of Madura. Beyond these were the quarters of the Javanese, Amboinese and negroes. During the heated portion of the day, from ten in the forenoon until four in the afternoon, when the soldiers were required to remain indoors on account of the intense heat, the camp resounded with a medley of songs. One could hear the abrupt, guttural bellowing of the blacks, the squeaking voices of the Madurese, the soporific ditties of the Javanese and popular airs in all European tongues.

All these troops were distinguished from each other not only by their language and complexion, but also by the treatment they received. Saridin was puzzled to learn what line of demarcation had been drawn to divide the various sets of warriors into categories of preferment.

A new captain had been assigned to Saridin's company. At the very first inspection he asked Saridin how he came to wear shoes. Before the latter could reply, he was ordered back to the barracks to take off his footgear. The captain clung to the letter of

the general law forbidding the natives to wear anything whatever on their feet.

Saridin had thrice obtained permission to wear shoes, a license regularly canceled by each new company commander and not renewed until after much petitioning on the part of Saridin.

One evening he stood guard in company with Kidjekru, a coal black negro from southern Africa. The negro wore shoes on his big, ungainly feet, while Saridin was barefooted. Darkness had settled on the valleys and obscured even the nearest mountain peaks. The kalongs, or flying foxes, a kind of large bat, cut through the air with their big wings. Armies of mosquitoes and fireflies filled the air with buzzing and humming noises and specks of light. The sounds of revelry from a nearby kampong, where a wedding was celebrated, ceased towards midnight. Only a forlorn swain, stretched out at full length on the ground before his hut, and gazing indifferently at the silvery stars, continued to accompany the weird music of the jungle world with a melancholy ditty in praise of the virtues of his loved one.

"Are there any kalongs in your country?" Saridin asked Kidjekru.

"I do not know," the black replied.

"Do you recollect the place of your birth?"

"Yes, indeed."

"What is its name?"

"This I do not know."

Saridin paused a moment and then began to catechise Kidjekru afresh.

"Do the people of your country wear sarongs?" he began.

"No, they run about naked."

"Does your country resemble Java?"

"No."

"Is it flat or mountainous?"

"The mountains there are so high that if I should gaze at the top, my cap would fall from my head."

Saridin thought that the peaks of Africa must indeed be very lofty, for he had never lost his cap when gazing at the tops of his native volcanoes.

"Is it true that men are butchered in your country?" Saridin continued his inquiry. The African displayed his flawless white teeth with a grin and said:

"Certainly, at feasts, to drink their blood."

Saridin observed the eyes of the African sparkle with savage desire, but remained unmoved by the recital of the atrocities practiced on the dark continent, for he had frequently heard the same story from the mouths of his negro comrades. He returned to his pet topic and asked Kidjekru:

"What induced you to enter the Dutch service?"

"I do not know."

"You do not know?" Saridin exclaimed.

"No."

"Was your father a soldier?"

"I do not remember my father. I was fourteen years old and herding cattle, when men with three incisions on their forehead came,—men with other names than ours. The people of our tribe have all two incisions on their foreheads, here, one, two."

When he said "here," the negro pointed out the deep scars on his cheeks deforming his face, which in their day served to designate the tribe to which he belonged.

"And then?" Saridin asked.

"The men of the other tribe unexpectedly attacked our village. Usually our tribe was the stronger, but this time they were taken by surprise, and our men were killed and their blood was drunk. I was made a prisoner together with many others and had to march westward all day for three years."

The negro gradually raised his voice while he was relating the history of his youth until Saridin reminded him that they were on guard duty.

"We finally reached the sea at Elmina," the negro continued. "The men of the other tribe received clothes and rum, much rum, and the men of our tribe went into the fort, while the others returned the way they came. I received clothes for my body and shoes for my feet, and could not run, only walk very slowly, so."

Here the negro imitated the dragging motion of an African suddenly compelled to perambulate in shoes.

"And then?" Saridin continued.

"Then a ship came and we went with it."

"Far away?"

"Yes, far away, one hundred, two hundred, three hundred days."

"To arms!" cried the sentry. The appearance of the captain of the watch interrupted the conversation and when the inspection was over, Kidjekru retired to his bunk to snore.

"These, then," Saridin reflected, "are the people put on the same footing with Europeans in Java, who wear shoes and receive better rations than the Javanese soldiers. The Javanese do not drink human blood, nor run about naked like the negroes in their native land. The Javanese have some ideas of morality and human dignity. Why was a Black Dutchman accorded more privileges than the Javanese? Because he is not at home here? Incomprehensible."

Saridin was ill at ease. The Christian Amboinese, he considered, a people of the same race and color as himself, also ranked higher than the Javanese. But a reason, however conflicting with the religious liberty proclaimed by the Dutch, could be found for this preference. The Amboinese, he thought, were early converts

to Christianity, and on this account they were put on the same footing with Europeans. But the Africans were no Christians when they became soldiers. They were sold as slaves in their own country and still were respected more than the inhabitant of a Javanese kampong who entered the service of his own accord. And besides the skin of an African was much darker than that of a Javanese. No, color could not be the measure employed by the whites in judging a man's worth.

But Saridin was bent upon dispelling the perplexities that tormented him.

"If I should turn Christian," he thought, "if I were to abjure the worship of Allah, of what use were it? The whites do not favor the Amboinese because the latter are Christians, but because they are born on Amboina, while Javanese converts remain the meanest of soldiers. Accursed be the fate which made me a Javanese!"

Saridin did not know that accident alone was responsible for the advantages of the Amboinese over the Javanese. In early days, when Amboina was the main stronghold of the Dutch East India company, the missionaries received all possible assistance from the government in their work of inducing the Mohammedan Amboinese to substitute the Bible for the Koran. All converts were supplied with the means of subsistence and permitted to wear European garbs, which meant entire personal liberty. According to tradition, the natives of Amboina were seized with such a sudden and strong desire to adopt the creed of the Nazarene that they flocked to the mission in large droves. As a separate baptismal rite for each prospective dark-hued Christian would have involved many inconveniences, entire crowds were baptized at once time, the hand fire engines of the settlement being called out to perform the necessary drenching.

The Amboinese enjoy to this day the privileges secured by a timely conversion to Christianity. A Javanese soldier, after an honorable service of six years in the Dutch army, wished to re-enlist and fancied in his innocence that he was entitled to do so as an Amboinese. He was told that this was impossible, that once a Javanese always a Javanese. He resented this stepmotherly treatment and returned to his kampong, the government losing the services of a faithful, skillful and half-civilized man.

5. THE MUTINY.

The scream of a night bird interrupted Saridin's meditations. He listened attentively and when the scream was repeated he got up and walked to the other side of the sentry box. His sharp eyes

recognized the figure of a woman seated at the base of a tjemara tree. Cautiously approaching her, he asked:

"Is there anything new yonder, Sarina?"

"There is."

"I was right, then. Speak!"

"No one sleeps in the quarters of the Black Hollanders!"

"Allah!"

"Many voices are heard speaking at the same time, the Black Hollanders cannot talk in a low tone."

"You have heard everything, then, Sarina?"

"Not everything, because they are talking in their native tongue. When the muskets were taken from the shelves—"

"The muskets? Do I hear correctly?"

"You do, Saridin. When the muskets were taken from the shelves, Njahi Bohassi said to her husband, 'Do not load, Bohassi!' but the latter thundered back: 'Silence, woman! the captain must die!'"

"And Kidjekru?" Saridin asked somewhat anxiously.

"Kidjekru is not one of the party."

"I thought so."

"Njahi Kidjekru," Sarina continued, "was ordered to call her husband from the watch, but refused. When Bohassi attempted to beat her, she drew her cape knife and defied him, saying: 'Try and beat me!' Then many voices cried: 'Don't beat her, sergeant! What's the difference?' and others said: 'Njahi Kidjekru is brave!'"

"Mark my words well, Sarina," he told her. "Hasten to the captain's house, have him get up and tell him that the Black Hollanders are making amuck. Then wake up all the Javanese and bid them arm themselves."

Sarina did as she was told and Saridin hastened to the guard-house, where he secured the ammunition chest. Cautiously waking his Javanese comrades in the guard-house, he beckoned them to seize their arms as noiselessly as possible and follow him.

Near the barracks of the Africans several dark figures are seen hovering about. The door to their quarters is blocked with men.

"Who's there?" Saridin shouted to the nearest figure.

A wild yell was all the answer he received.

"Who's there?" he repeated, approaching the mutineers on a run.

All the negroes save one retreated upon recognizing the fearless Saridin. Bohassi, the principal ringleader, alone held his ground, aimed his gun at him and fired. Saridin heard the bullet whistling past his ear and commanded his men to fire. Seven shots rang simultaneously through the still night air and the Javanese reloaded their guns and advanced.

Bohassi was found swimming in his blood. His comrades had dispersed, some seeking refuge in the barracks and others taking to the woods.

Saridin and his men reached the barracks almost as soon as the rebellious negroes and closed the door upon them. At every moment other Javanese soldiers, alarmed by Sarina, rushed to Saridin's assistance, and the negroes were completely surrounded by troops before the officers appeared on the scene. A general alarm was immediately given and called the entire garrison under arms. The African company surrendered and all save thirty-seven men were accounted for. These had sought refuge in the neighboring bushes and did not surrender until ten of their number had fallen after a desperate resistance.

Saridin, whose energetic action had suppressed the mutiny in the bud, was rewarded by promotion to the rank of second lieutenant and transferred to another battalion.

A commissioned officer's epaulets now graced his shoulders, an orange sash encircled his slender body, and neat shoes hid his small, well-shaped feet. The officers pressed his hand and wished him a happy journey. A servant approached with a saddle horse, and Saridin started to overtake Sarina who had preceded him on the journey to Weltevreden, the sphere of his new activity.

6. DISENCHANTMENT.

As an officer Saridin fared worse than formerly. He felt to their fullest extent the disadvantages of having been born a Javanese. The charm attached to his rise in rank vanished in a few brief years with the gloss of his epaulets. He discovered that the government treated the native officer even more stepmotherly than the native soldier. Compelled to live and dress according to his rank, his pay and allowances were only one-half of those of his white colleagues. Except for occasional visits to the Officers' club, he had to content himself with living like an ordinary Javanese.

He spent his idle hours in the company of Sarina on the rear veranda of his bamboo dwelling. He had risen far above his original station, but found himself barred from all intercourse with his equals. It is true, another native lieutenant resided in Weltevreden, but he was a semi-idiot from old age and childishness. Intercourse with native dignitaries was out of the question, because they would not have considered him, the parvenu, their equal, and, even if they had condescended to accept his company, he would have been unable to entertain them in a manner suitable to their rank.

As a subaltern officer, Saridin had felt far happier, for he was then at least respected to a certain degree. As an officer, he was almost a cipher. He lacked the technical knowledge required for special commissions and was not deemed worthy, on account of his nationality, of service at headquarters. These bitter experiences threw

Saridin into a profound melancholy. By degrees he lost the elasticity of mind which had characterized him in former years.

He saw the European lieutenants advance, while his life was becoming hopelessly monotonous.

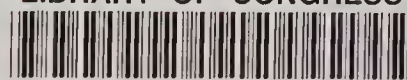
Saridin became more and more of a recluse with misanthropical feelings embittering the contemplation of his lot. In one of his abject moods, he broke his sword of honor and threw out of the window his medals, the testimonials of his valor and fidelity. Finally, after an uneventful sojourn of six years in Weltevreden, he was transferred to Soorabaya, where a continuance of the same cheerless and monotonous life awaited him.

Silently a steamer ploughed its way through the smooth and phosphorescent waters of the Java Sea. The Southern Cross shone with all its brilliancy in the southwestern part of the heavens. The air was balmy with the spicy odors wafted across from the ever-green isles. The night was far advanced and all was quiet on the deck of the vessel. Sarina slept peacefully in her cabin. Saridin sat close to the rail on the backboard and stared upon the shining sea. His whole past life flitted through his imagination. An intense melancholy seized him. The vanity and barrenness of all the heroic efforts of his earlier days crushed his spirit, his will power ebbed away and his devoted Sarina was for the moment forgotten. His mind reeled and his body inclined more and more to the outside of the rail. The phosphorescent sea appeared to his dimmed eyes like the reflexion of a better world. He lost his balance, the watch pacing the quarter-deck heard a splash, and Saridin sank unobserved beneath the placid and discreet surface of the deep.

The next morning several passengers stood with moist eyes before the cabin of an unhappy woman, who tore her garments, contorted her body and mourned the loss of her husband with the wildest expressions of inconsolable grief.



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